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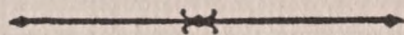
“ ‘Why, d y’ let him shoot my pop fur ?’ ”



# STORIES OF THE BLUE <sup>AND THE</sup> GRAY



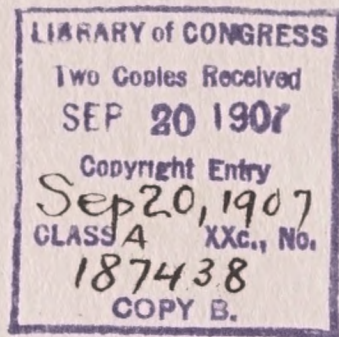
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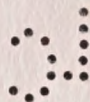
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# STORIES of The BLUE AND THE GRAY



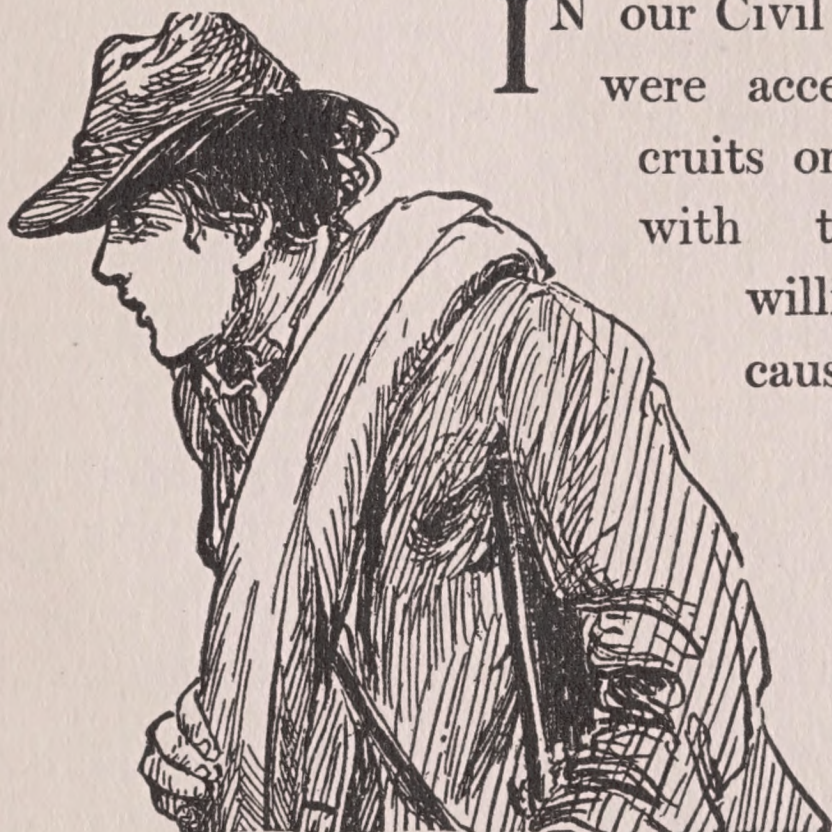
# Contents

	PAGE
Foreword - - - - -	5
The Little Confederate Courier - - - - -	11
Three Little Refugees - - - - -	34
Robert Nix, Deserter - - - - -	66
The Sentinel of Live Oaks - - - - -	80
Lieutenant Stanton's Escape - - - - -	100
The Federal Raiders - - - - -	119
How Captain Newt Reached the Union Lines - - - - -	140
Communicating with the Enemy - - - - -	165









I N our Civil War, boys were accepted as recruits on both sides with the greater willingness because experience had already shown that they made good soldiers. There were forcible

reasons why, as a general thing, they could go better than men more advanced in life. The great majority of those who were past the line of manhood had families depending upon them.

These could scarcely be blamed for feeling as a German soldier did at Chancellorsville. When the rout of Howard's corps was at its



height, and the officers were attempting to arrest the tide of disaster, the man alluded to was sharply rebuked by his commander for running away.

“Sheneral,” he exclaimed, indignantly, “vat kind of a blace is this for a man mit a vife und sefen shildren!”

The boys and young men under twenty years of age had fathers, mothers, brothers and sisters to whom they were bound by the strongest and most endearing ties; but it was nevertheless true, and they knew it, that they could be spared more easily than their married brothers.

They started, as all the raw soldiers did, with great bulging knapsacks, crammed to the utmost with mementos of affection with which the loving ones at home had loaded them down, Mothers and sisters would not have done this had they imagined how many pounds every ounce on a soldier's back seemed to weigh on the long, weary marches.

The boys quickly learned to “shed” their



surplusage, and within three months from the time they entered the service half of them abandoned the knapsack altogether. They wore their blouses and trousers until they had an opportunity to draw new ones. If they had a change of under-garments they carried them in their blankets, which were twisted into a roll, tied at the ends like old-fashioned doughnuts, and thrown over the head from one shoulder to the opposite hip.

Then there were the muskets, the belt with cartridge-box and bayonet-scabbard, the haversack with three days' rations, and the canteen full of water. The soldier was often required to carry a hundred pounds of heavy ball cartridge—forty in the box and the rest in pockets or haversack, as he might choose.

Besides these there were an overcoat, a rubber blanket or "ponche," which was invaluable in wet weather, and half of a shelter or "pup" tent. By the time a boy had carried all these twenty miles in a day, or perhaps thirty miles under the stress of an



emergency, he knew what it was to be tired, as he never did while hoeing corn or making hay.

How every bone and muscle and tendon ached, and how keen was the pain from the blisters upon his tender feet! What a blessed relief it was, at the end of the day's tramp, to throw off the accoutrements, bathe the feet in a stream, and then drop upon the ground to rest!

It was such a life as this that soon made veterans and heroes of the boys, and the heroes were pretty evenly distributed on both sides. The hero in blue and the hero in gray were very much alike, and but for the difference in the color of their uniforms might well have been chumming together under the same tent.

In the following tales I have taken the blue and gray impartially. They all fought with the same bravery, the same convictions. Young Lane's heart was gray, though his father's was blue, and he risked and gave his life cheerfully for what he thought was right,



even as did his father. And so in "The Sentinel at Live Oaks," "Communicating with the Enemy," and the other stories, the blue and gray, watched, waited, suffered and endured, with equal courage and devotion.

After all these years we can love one as the other, sympathize with the hopes and admire the pluck and steadfastness of purpose of both the boys from the North and the boys from the South; for they were one, with only a difference of opinion.

FRANK H. SWEET.









# *The Little* **CONFEDERATE COURIER**

“**H**ELLO, my little man!”

“Hello!”

“Where’re you going?”

“T’ that house thar.”

A mounted officer in gray uniform, at the head of half a dozen troopers, was speaking with a boy eleven or twelve years old, whom he had met walking along a path by the side of the road. The time was at the close of a Southern winter, in 186—, and the location was in a “border” State.

The child was small for his age, but sturdy. On his head was an old straw hat, through which the hair peeped in places. He wore a short jacket, out at the elbows, and trousers rolled up at the bottom. Several little toes



thrust themselves through cracks in his shoes, and his shirt was unbuttoned at the collar. Despite his unseasonable apparel, the child did not seem to be cold. He was ruddy as an apple.

“Where do you live?” asked the officer, a lieutenant, after surveying the little figure contemplatively. The boy turned around and pointed to a house on an eminence in the direction from which he had come.

“Is your father Union or Confederate?”

“Union.”

The officer scowled. During the Civil War the Southern troops were far more bitter against the Union men of the South than toward Northern soldiers.

“I ain’t no Union man, though,” added the boy, thrusting his hands into his pockets, planting his legs firmly at an angle, and looking up at the soldiers resolutely. “I’m a rebel.”



There was a burst of laughter from the troop at his implied defiance.

“What’s your father’s name?”

“Tom Lane, and mine’s Tom Lane, too.”

The officer turned his head and glanced meaningfully at a sergeant who was close behind him.

“Is your father at home?”

“No, sir.”

“When will he be at home?”

“I dunno.” The boy knit his brows. Then, with a quick change of interest and expression, he asked, “Whar you-uns a-goen’?”

The officer smiled. “Where are you going, my lad?”

“Over thar.” He pointed with his finger.

“Oh yes, I forgot. And what are you going to do over there?” Tom colored. “Oh, I aint a-goin’ to do nothin’ but leave sump’n’ in the post-office on the fence.”

The “post-office” was a box with a slit in the top which had been put up for the pur-



pose of children's correspondence. The officer noticed that the chubby hand grasped a bit of folded paper.

"Sergeant," said the officer, speaking low. "Tom Lane's the man we are after. This is his boy. We must try and find out if Lane is at home, or where he is. I've orders to take him, dead or alive."

"My little man," he continued to the boy, "will you answer some questions for the good of your country?"

"I reckon so."

"Then tell me where your father is."

"He aint none o' us; he's Union."

"Yes, but where is he?"

"My pop aint got nothin' to do with you-uns. Ast me some other things, 'n' I'll tell 'em."

The officer was baffled. Indeed, he was ashamed of his work in trying to induce a boy to betray his father. The lad started on. The sergeant



was about to ride forward to stop him, but the officer ordered him back. The troop rode on to a cross-road which led to a wood to the right; then turned down this road and entered the wood. Finding a spring of good water, they went into bivouac. A man was detailed to ride after the boy, and secure the missive he intended to drop in the letter-box.

The soldiers picketed their horses and cooked their supper. While they were eating, the man who had been sent for the letter came in. The officer unfolded the little scrap of paper, and read this scrawl in a child's hand:

March Thurd.

Dere Maggy. I want you fur to be mi swethart. Wen I git a man I agoen fur to be a sojer. Mi pop is agoen to bring me a gun. He's comen hoam tomorrer. Maw she sais Im to little fur a gun but I reckon I'll git it anyway. Yures trewly.

Tom Lane Junyer.



The officer spelled out this communication with some difficulty, and put it in his pocket. It contained all the information he wanted. He had now nothing to do but to wait in order to capture Tom Lane, guerilla.

The next morning the boy was playing in the road not far from his father's house. A Confederate officer, with stars on his coat-collar, rode up, followed by his staff, and asked him some questions about the topography of the surrounding country, which the boy answered promptly. The general praised him for a smart boy, and then said, "You seem to know the country pretty well. Do you know the road to J—?"

"Yes, sir."

"Can you ride?"

"Ride! Reckon I can ride! Ain't done nothin' else sence I was little."

"How would you like to carry a message for me?"



“Y’ain’t no Yank, are y’?”

“I’m a Confederate officer.”

“I’ll do anythin’ for our sojers,” said Tom, with a proud flash in his eye.

“Then come with me,” and without ceremony, the child was put on the back of a led horse beside a cavalryman, and rode with the general and his staff to headquarters. When they arrived at camp, the general turned the child over to an aide, but in half an hour ordered him to be brought to his tent.

“Now, my boy, said the officer, looking intently into the child’s honest brown eyes, “I’m going to send you on an important errand. Though you are a boy, you must have the courage of a man.”

The boy made no reply. He was looking straight at the general. “I want you to take this”—he held out something that looked like a pill. “It’s a roll of tissue paper in tin foil, and there’s a message written on it. Take it to



General—, commanding the Confederate force at J—. You'll have to go through the Yankee pickets. Do you understand?"

"Yes, sir."

"General," interposed the aide, impatiently, "this is a duty for me, not for this child."

"How could you pass the enemy's pickets?" demanded the general sharply. Then, without permitting a reply, he went on giving the boy his instructions.

"You are so young that I think the pickets will let you go where you please—"

"I'm twelve," interrupted Tom.

"Are you? Well, you must keep up a stout heart, and not look frightened."

"I reckon I won't be scared consid'able."

"Take this." The general put his finger into the pocket of the boy's jacket to see if it was whole; then rolling the pellet in a piece of newspaper, he slipped it into his pocket. "If you must lose it, swallow it."



The boy looked surprised, but said, "I will!" resolutely.

The general took the little fellow by the hand. It was a curious contrast, the grizzly-bearded Southern commander looking down from his six feet of height into the boy's little round face, and holding the chubby fist in his knotty hand. He was loath to relinquish it; loath to let the boy go. He was about to send a child on a perilous errand. He could have sent a man without compunction, even if he knew the chances were nine in ten that he would be shot; but this boy—

"Go!" he said suddenly, and motioned the aide to take him away. Another moment and he could not have done it.

Tom Lane, Junior, who advanced to the dignity of a Confederate courier, was placed on a good-natured horse which was to carry him on his journey. The aide took him to the Confederate picket line, and started him off up the road. He stood looking at the flaxen-haired



urchin, whose little legs stuck out on either side over the round flanks of the horse at an obtuse angle, wishing that he might call him back. He watched the boy till he rounded a curve in the road. The young courier turned and smiled; a smile of innocence, of courage, of conscious pride in the work to be done. In another moment he was lost to the officer's view.

That day passed and the next. The commander, who was awaiting the outcome of his plan of communication, did little but pace anxiously back and forth before his tent. Though abrupt in manner, he was usually singularly kind to those under his orders. Now he seemed the very incarnation of military severity. When twenty-four hours had passed and his courier did not return, he became so crusty that no member of his staff cared to approach him.

On the second evening at dusk the pickets heard the clattering of a horse's hoofs on the pike. A horse came in sight, and on his back was the



little courier, hatless, swaying in the saddle, but riding at a gallop. The soldiers grasped the bridle and stopped him.

“Take me to the general, quick!”

He was deathly pale and the blood trickled down his side. They led the horse toward headquarters; a man walking on each side to sustain the boy in the saddle. As they proceeded



The Little Courier

the courier told his story in detached sentences.

He had found no difficulty in getting within the Union lines, but had been obliged to try several times before he could succeed in leaving them. He reached the Confederate Army late at night, delivered his message, and was well cared for by order of the general commanding.



The next morning a reply to the message he had brought was given him, and he started back. Again he passed free into the Union lines, and again he found difficulty in leaving the lines on the opposite side. At last, getting some distance beyond a picket who was watching him, he resolved to make a dash for it. "I thought he wouldn't shoot me," said Tom, "'case I war so little. I reckon he couldn't see who I war fur the trees 'n' things."

"Where are you hit?" asked one of the men.

"Here." He put his hand to his left side below his heart. "Go on, quick! I'm weakenin'."

When the party arrived in front of the tent they found the general still walking back and forth in deep anxiety. When he saw his little messenger sitting on the horse, pale and bleeding, he strode up to him and brushing away the men, without a word took him in his arms, carried him into his tent and laid him on his own camp cot. Then he bent over him and groaned.



The boy took from his mouth a pellet similar to the one he had carried on his journey outward and held it to the general. The soldier took it, but for a few moments was too much moved to open it. Then suddenly remembering its importance, he unrolled it and read its contents.

"Good!" he exclaimed, his face momentarily brightening. Calling for his chief of staff, he ordered that the men be put in readiness to march at a moment's notice. This done he seemed to forget everything but the wounded boy.

"My brave boy!" he said, kneeling by him and putting his arms about him. "We owe you everything. You can't be much hurt. You must not be much hurt. You must get well and I will put you on my staff. You shall be a little captain. You have accomplished more for the cause than I ever have."

"A cap'n?" exclaimed the boy.

"Yes, a captain. Anything. You shall always be with me."



A transient look of pleasure passed over the boy's pale face. Then he seemed to remember something. "You better send me hoam. My pop won't know whar I ben."

"I'll take you myself. Orderly, get an ambulance! Bring bandages! Be quick! Why doesn't the surgeon come?"

The ambulance came, and the surgeon came, but when he looked at the child he shook his head.

"He will live, doctor?" asked the general, as though commanding the surgeon to save the boy's life.

Again the surgeon shook his head. The general turned abruptly away to hide his emotion.

"I want to go fur to see my pop," said the boy, feebly.

The commander turned and took him in his arms, carried him out to the ambulance and gently laid him in it. The surgeon got up on the seat with the driver, and the general sat at



the rear end with his feet on the step, while aides and orderlies followed mounted, an orderly leading the general's horse. And thus they went slowly to the boy's home.

When they arrived they found the house surrounded by Confederate cavalrymen. The lieutenant the boy had met two days before came up as the ambulance drove up to the door. That morning before daylight, he and his men had surprised Tom Lane and half a dozen Union guerillas who were sleeping there. A fight had ensued. Tom Lane was killed, and his men—three of them badly wounded—were prisoners.

The cloud on the general's brow darkened as he heard the story. He had brought a death-wound to a child, and now he was bringing that child to a home where lay the dead body of his father, killed by the men whose cause his son had served so nobly—killed by his own order.

The general lifted his charge tenderly from the ambulance and carried him into the house



of mourning. The wife and mother were there, with several of the neighbors who had come to be with her in her affliction. She sat in a rocking chair weeping.

“Maw,” said the boy, excitedly, “I’m a-goen’ fur to be a cap’n!”

In the gray of the morning the woman had seen her husband shot down before her eyes. In the twilight of evening she saw her boy carried in, bleeding, with death written in his pale face and wild eye. The double affliction overcame her. She swooned and was taken to an adjoining room.

The general laid his light burden on a sofa. The boy caught sight of a little girl about his own age who had come to the house with her mother.

“Mag,” he said, “did yo’ git my letter?”

“No,” said Mag, “I didn’t git no letter, but I seen one o’ them sojers take sump’n out’n the box.”



The general glanced sharply at the lieutenant. The young officer took a crumpled bit of paper from his pocket and handed it to the commander, who was about to transfer it to little Maggie, when the lieutenant whispered to him that it contained the information by which they had caught the Unionists.

The general sat mute, with the unopened paper between his fingers. A reproof for his subordinate was on his tongue, but he did not speak it. In warfare it is essential to examine private papers. The boy who had done them so signal a service had been robbed of his childish scrawl, and the information it contained had been used to surprise that boy's father. With bowed head the soldier handed the paper to the little girl.

At this moment the wounded boy caught sight of his father lying stiff and stark on the bed.

"Pop!" he exclaimed, with a moan, "pop!"



He had never seen death, but something told him that this was death. With difficulty he raised himself and sat up on the lounge.

“Did you shoot my pop?” he asked, looking with his great, honest eyes at the lieutenant. Without a word the officer turned as one might turn from a storm of bullets, and left the house. The boy fastened a reproachful gaze on the general.

“What d’y’ let him shoot my pop fur?”

“My boy—my little hero,” began the soldier—he could not go on. How could he make a child understand the necessities of war? Chivalrous war! that permitted him to read a child’s letter and kill the child’s father, who was on the opposite side.

“I didn’t do nothen to you-uns. What d’ you-uns want t’ go ’n’ kill my pop fur?” moaned the boy.

Little Maggie was standing by, looking on with childish wonder.



“Mag,” said Tom, “I writ y’ that letter. I writ it all myself, all on’t. The sojers taken it, I reckon.”

The general drew the girl up to the lounge, and put her hand in that of the boy. The two children remained in this position to the end. The boy soon began to wander. He was riding with the paper pellet in his mouth; he was passing the pickets; he was conversing with officers and soldiers. All the while the general was trying to soothe him, smoothing back the uncombed locks from his forehead, or pouring a little water between his lips.

Suddenly the boy sat up.

“I’m a-goen’ fur to be a cap’n!” he shouted, then fell back dead.

The next afternoon the army, beginning a movement for which the little courier had paved the way, had struck its tents and was marching along the road that led past the Lane house. As the head of the column emerged from a wood,



the men saw a funeral procession, composed of some officers, soldiers and a few country people, leave the house and march along to an enclosed lot in a field near by,—the family burial-place.

Two coffins, the one but half the size of the other, were borne by Confederate soldiers. They contained the bodies of Tom Lane, father, and Tom Lane, son, the one of the Union, and the other of the Confederacy. Directly behind walked the general, then a company of soldiers,—a captain's escort; and next a group of neighbors.

The procession moved slowly onward to the enclosure in which a grave had been dug. The two coffins were lowered, and laid side by side in the one grave. The general, who held in his hands a bundle of green sprigs, cast them into the grave. The earth was shovelled in and a volley fired by the soldiers over the grave.

By this time the head of the advancing column



had reached the burial-place, where the general was standing with uncovered head, while the last shovelfuls of earth were being thrown upon the grave. The men of an army are quick to gather news, and not a soldier but knew already the story of the two Lanes.

As the column marched by, the men of the leading company, seeing their general standing with head uncovered, raised their hats. The action was followed by the next and the next company, and was taken up by regiment after regiment, troop after troop, battery after battery; the twelve thousand men passed and uncovered. Then the little group of mourners and spectators disbanded, and the general was joined by his staff, mounted his horse and rode in the direction the troops were marching.

That night in bivouac the following order was promulgated:

“1. Captain Thomas Lane, Junior, aged twelve years, is announced as aide-de-camp on the



staff of the general commanding, and will be obeyed and respected as such.

“2. The customary mourning will be observed by the officers and men of this command for thirty days for Captain Thomas Lane, Junior, of the staff of the general commanding, who died gallantly in the service of the Confederate States. His commission has been applied for and will be forwarded to his family.”

The next morning, before daylight, the Confederate armies which had become separated and liable to capture in detail, formed a junction, and together attacked and turned the Union left.

On a mantel in the house where the two Lanes died is a frame containing a captain's commission.

On the day, each year, sacred to the memory of those who fell in that direful contest a third of a century ago, the grave which holds the father and son is covered with flowers, brought by the



neighbors for miles around. Among these flowers on every anniversary is a wreath composed of buds of red roses. These wreaths are all sent by the same person. Though no name comes with them, it is well understood that they are from the man who sacrificed a child to save an army.





# Three Little REFUGEES

A SHORT procession of roughly-dressed mountaineers, together with a few sad-faced women, came slowly and quietly down the rocky and narrow trail leading from a little group of gloomy and stunted pines, to a dozen or more small log houses, half-way between the summit of the mountain and the narrow gulch below. Some of the men wore scarcely recognizable portions of gray uniform, which, scanty and dilapidated as they were, still hinted of the Confederate army.

Only a few hours before these men had been skulking up the slope, dodging from tree to tree and rock to rock, seeking as they would a wild beast a man who had been a friend and neighbor. When the war broke out this man had slipped



away and joined the Union army. A year later he was wounded, and came home to visit his family. But he came by stealth, for he knew his half-guerilla neighbors, and that their hate would not be bounded by law or remembrance of former friendship. Now he was lying dead across his own threshold; and his wife, who had thrown herself in front in a vain hope to shelter him, was lying dead by his side.

Such news travels quickly even in the mountain wilds, and almost before the echoes of the fatal volley had died away there were hushed comments of it between the doorways and windows of the cabins below, and some of the sad-faced women were hurrying up the slope. Now that their hate was satisfied it was forgotten, and only the neighborliness of their victims was remembered. Besides, up at the cabin were three young girls, one of them scarcely more than a baby; and before the estrangements of the war the two older girls had been general favorites on the slope.



But now the girls would have none of their help, or their offers of sympathy. Huldah, who was fourteen and the oldest, stood beside the forms of her parents, her eyes dry and flashing. Bertha, twelve years of age, was crying softly, but between her sobs her eyes flashed as scornfully as her sister's. Six year old Nell was lying at full length, her face buried in her mother's dress. They would bury their own dead, Huldah said with steady voice; and the former neighbors, after standing about for some minutes, turned and walked slowly down the path, all the fierceness now gone from the men's eyes. It was an accident about the woman, they told each other many times in apologetic moroseness. They were not woman shooters.

The morning after their dead were buried, and buried by their own hands, Huldah and Bertha sat before the fire and soberly discussed their future, while Nell still slept peacefully on her bunk filled with pine boughs and bear skins in a corner of the cabin.



Their lot could not have been cast in a drearier or more unpromising place than Wildcat Slope, half-way up the barren side of a mountain, ten miles from the nearest town, and ten times as far from the nearest railroad, and with no neighbors but the slayers of their parents. They had few possessions, a dilapidated wagon with a canvas top, in which they had wandered here from Texas ten years before, an old horse in keeping with the wagon, some worn household and cooking utensils, and a few silver dollars in Huldah's pockets. But on the other hand, they had browsed through life upon almost nothing, and could live where many would starve.

"We can't stay here," said Huldah decidedly.

"I don't want to stay," replied Bertha.

"Nor I," said Huldah. "We'll go back to Texas, where mother lived, or to some other place,—anywhere from this mountain."

"How?" with some animation.



“In the wagon. It’s the only way. We haven’t any money to go on the cars, even if we could get to a railroad.”

“Y—es, if only old Charley will hold out to carry us.”

Old Charley was a bony and feeble horse, tied at that moment to a wheel of the wagon, outside. He had accompanied the Haydens in all their wanderings, resting with them a year in Texas among Mrs. Hayden’s people, and then drawing the wagon across state after state to this bleak mountain side, for no reason apparently save to please the wanderer’s erratic fancy and because the mountain side offered good hunting. Poorly fed and seldom housed from summer rains and winter snows, old Charley’s hardships had been many.

By nine o’clock the next morning Huldah had old Charley hitched to the wagon, in which their few possessions had been placed. An hour later Huldah drove the horse around a



sharp curve in the mountain road, and they saw the log houses and bleak slope no more.

A cold wind was coming up from the gulch, and there were a few fine flakes of snow whirling in the air, but the young emigrants hoped to find it warmer with each descending mile, as the autumn had been an unusually mild one.

As they drove slowly along, with little Nell seated between them wrapped in a great bear skin, Huldah and Bertha discussed their prospects.

They were strangely ignorant regarding the names and whereabouts of any of their relatives. Their information was confined to vague and indefinite remembrances of the fact that "ma had two sisters somewhere in Texas," with whom they had stayed before coming to the west Tennessee mountains; and pa had a brother in Iowa. But no letters had ever been exchanged, and ten years had passed since they left Texas.

But Huldah was a hopeful, courageous girl,



and hardships had made Bertha old and wise beyond her years.

“We’ll get along some way, I reckon,” she said bravely.

“Yes,” Huldah agreed, “We’ll keep on toward Texas, an’ if we can’t find some place where we can get work ’fore we reach there, we’ll try to hunt up ma’s sisters. We’ll get along some way.”

So they journeyed on down mountain slopes and through long canons until they came out upon the level country.

It was now November. The season had been a warm one. The land before them was free from snow, the days were sunny, and the nights not too cold for them to sleep comfortably in the wagon. So they went forward, a forlorn little company. Their well-nigh disabled wagon, the horse’s too prominent bones, and the peculiarities of their appearance and method of travel excited both interest and amusement in the towns



through which they passed. Occasionally they met straggling parties from the Confederate army, and once were stopped by Union soldiers. Usually at such times the wagon was searched, but none of the contents were ever molested. The artlessness of the children, their



“So they journeyed on.”

pathetic story, portions of which came out in the conversation, and the uncertainty of their future and vague destination, all tended to make friends of those who had only felt suspicion.

The old horse grew bonier and more feeble as



the journey grew longer. They had to travel very slowly. There were some days when old Charley was too lame and tired to carry them on at all. On such days they had a dreary time, sitting about the camp-fire or in the wagon while the December wind swept around.

Their small sum of money grew smaller from day to day, as they purchased the food they must have at the widely scattered villages through which they passed on their journey,—whither they knew not.

At each village Huldah now tried to find employment for them, always unsuccessfully. But often, when they encamped near a town or farm-house, curious-minded but kind-hearted men and women would come out to the wagon, and the children went on their way with gifts of food and clothing, and often they found shelter at night and on stormy days in hospitable cabins or farm-houses.

It was the day before Christmas that they



found themselves facing a strong, cold wind from the North, as they drove toward a little town far in the distance, but plainly visible across the flat country. The wind flapped the ragged cover of the wagon as it rattled along over the frozen ground, and late in the day flakes of snow began flying in at the open front of the wagon.

Old Charley walked slowly and unsteadily along, while Huldah sat on the front seat holding the lines in her chilled hands. Bertha and little Nell sat on the straw in the back part of the wagon, warmly wrapped in bear and deer skins, of which, fortunately, they had a good supply.

Nell was a light-hearted little thing, even amid her dismal surroundings, and once her curly head, tied up in a red nubia, appeared above the mass of robes, among which she sat, as she said, "Say, Huldah?"

"Well?"

"Is to-morrow Christmas?"



“Yes.”

“Oh, goody!”

Huldah and Bertha were silent. There were tears in both their eyes, for, poor as their parents had always been, they had always made much of Christmas, “saving up” for it for weeks beforehand. Only last Christmas they had had a tree, the memory of which made little Nell’s eyes sparkle and her cheeks glow, although it had been only a poor little tree, after all, strung with pop-corn, and having fewer things on it than many children find in one of their stockings.

With the tree still in mind, Nell asked, “We’ll have another tree, won’t we, Huldah?”

“I—I—I’m afraid not.”

“Nor nothing in my stockings?”

Huldah thought of the three or four pieces of silver in her pocket. It was the last of their money, but she said, as cheerily as she could, “Yes, yes, little one. You shall have *something* in your stocking, anyhow.”



"Can't we have even a teenty-tonty tree?"

"I'll see, dear."

"Ain't there any old Mr. Santa Claus in this country?"

"I guess so."

"Well, you must send him word, and tell him I want a tree, a big tree, with forty thousand bushels of things on it, and I shall go right to work now and pray real hard for what I want most. What shall I pray for for you, Huldah?"

"Oh, nothing."

"What, not even some molasses candy?"

"Oh yes, I'd like that."

"Well, I'll ask for that for you, and for a lovely blue silk dress and a perlanno to make music on."

There was silence for a long time after that. The short, dull day was ending in gloomy darkness when they reached the outskirts of the little town. They unhitched old Charley on the low bank of a little stream a short distance from the



nearest house. The wind had gone down. A light snow was falling, and it was warmer.

Huldah built a fire, and while she went to the town for a loaf of bread Bertha made tea. After their frugal supper was eaten there was nothing left for them to do but to "snuggle up," as Nell said, in the bear skins and straw in the wagon and go to sleep.

Before she lay down for the night the little girl went to the end of the wagon and pinned a pair of ragged stockings to the outside of the wagon cover.

"There now," she said, when this was done to her satisfaction, "it won't be the leastest bit of trouble for Santy Claus to stop here on his way to town, and he can fill my stockings without even getting out of his sleigh."

Huldah and Bertha sat silent by the camp-fire, looking at the pair of empty stockings dangling from the pins that held them. Suddenly Huldah said, "We ain't got but forty cents in the world, Bertha, but I'd rather spend it all



than have her get up in the morning and find them stockings empty.”

“So would I,” replied Bertha, promptly. “I couldn’t bear to have her find nothing at all in them.”

“I reckon she’d sleep sound enough and not waken if you and I went up into the town and bought her something for her stockings.”

“Oh, yes, she never opens her eyes after she once gets to sleep, and there’s no danger of her coming to harm here.”

So, after seeing that Nell was well covered under the robes, and the wagon cover closely drawn in front and behind, Huldah and Bertha walked up the one unlighted street of the dreary little town, in which there were no signs of Christmas cheer. There were but two or three stores, and the Christmas toys on sale were few and poor. But they seemed grand and abundant to these two girls, who had lived all their lives on the plains and on mountain slopes.

They bought a large yellow orange and a tin



lamb on wheels, and then went on up the street until they came to a small wooden church in which there was a Christmas tree for the children of the town. A woman about to enter saw them trying to peep in at one of the frosty windows, and asked them to go in with her. They shyly accepted the invitation.

They were mistaken in their theory that no one would go near the wagon while they were gone. Hardly had they entered the town, when there came riding swiftly and boisterously across the fields a hilarious company of half a dozen horsemen of the class which, while nominally belonging to the Southern army, were in reality guerillas and "slip-law" robbers of the worst type. The semi-military uniforms they wore were but cloaks for their depredations. Especially when they had a person of Union principles in their power was their ferocity shown, as though that might strengthen their position.





She pinned a pair of her ragged stockings to the outside of the wagon cover.







The men who now came riding across the fields had not the best of intentions in visiting the little town. There was a saloon of the lowest class just outside the village. The riders intended to make a visit to this saloon,—after that no one, not even themselves, could say what form their festivities would take.

The old wagon with its flapping cover attracted their attention as they came galloping along. They reined up their horses before it and began joking about its dilapidated appearance, the still burning camp-fire revealing its rickety and ragged condition.

“That’d be a gay old rig to ride up an’ down Fifth Avenue in, wouldn’t it?” said one of the men.

“It’s seen mighty tough times, that’s sure,” said another. “Wonder where the owner of such an elegant outfit is? If he ain’t careful somebody’ll steal it. It ain’t safe to let valuables lie around loose in this country for—well, I’ll be everlastingly ding-fiddled—look there!”



He pointed his whip at Nell's stockings, as a sudden flame from the fire revealed them flapping in the breeze. "If some youngster ain't hung up its stockings for Christmas!"

The other men drew near. One or two of them dismounted, and one tall, lank man, older than his companions, took one of the stockings and felt of it, saying, "Well, old Santa Claus ain't filled it yet, and I don't reckon—hello!"

He stepped back in surprise as a curly brown head was thrust from the rear of the wagon, and a childish voice said:

"Are *you* Mister Santa Claus?"

The men on the horses laughed, and one of them said, "She caught you that time, Cap."

"Well, who be *you*, anyhow?" asked the man addressed as Cap.

"I'm Helen May Hayden."

"Oh, you be, be you? Where's all your folks."

"I ain't got none, only just Huldah and



Bertha, and I s'pose they've gone off to hunt Santa Claus. Do you s'pose they'll find him?"

"It's hard telling whether they will or not. What if they don't?"

The child's lips quivered and her voice trembled as she said, "Then I s'pose my stockings 'll be empty in the morning, and they ain't been empty a Christmas yet."

"Where'd you come from, anyhow?"

"From the mountains. We're Unions, and we're running off."

"Unions, eh," and there was a change in his voice. But only for a moment; the wistful, baby face was too appealing.

"And your dad didn't come with you?"

"He couldn't—they killed him."

"Nor your marm?"

"She's killed, too."

"And there ain't nobody in the cart with you?"

"No'm, nobody."



“Who’s Huldah and Bertha?”

“My two sisters — and they’re splendid. *They’ll* find Santy Claus. Huldah’s got forty cents for him. I heard her tell Bertha so.”

“Oh, she has? Well, I guess you’d better crawl back there and snuggle down among the bed-clothes till they come back. That’s what you’d better do. Good-night.”

“Good-night, mister; if you see Santy Claus you’ll tell him ’bout my stockings.?”

“Oh yes. Good-night, and sleep tight.”

“Good-night. I wish you a Merry Christmas.”

The men mounted their horses and rode away in the darkness, the tall man called Cap dashing silently on ahead of the others.

When Huldah and Bertha returned they found little Nell sleeping as peacefully as when they left her. They put the orange into one stocking and the toy lamb into the other, together with a little bag of candy that had been given them at the church.



They climbed up into the wagon and were soon sleeping by Nell's side—three homeless young wayfarers under the Christmas skies.

It was after ten o'clock when a man rode silently and slowly out from the town, casting half-furtive glances back, as if fearing he might be followed by some of the companions, who had long ago missed him from their revels in the saloon. He had heard one of them come to the door and call after him as he stole away, but they knew that he was a man whom it was best for them not to follow, so they went back to their cups, expecting him to return soon.

He rode straight to the wagon, dismounted, and stood for a moment listening near in the darkness, his arms and pockets full of bundles. He filled the little stockings to the top, and tied the other bundles to a wheel of the cart. Then he stood still for a few moments, his head bent forward and resting on the wagon wheel.

A moment later he mounted his horse and rode a few rods in the direction of the town,—



then, wheeling suddenly and furiously around, he dashed madly away in the darkness over the plain in the direction from whence he and his companions had come, while they waited in vain for his return.

“I jest bet ye Cap’s went back to that there wagon,” said one of the men. “He’s a queer one, is Cap. It ain’t the first time I’ve knowed him to act queer after running across some little youngster, an’ I b’lieve there’s something in that story I’ve heered ’bout him once havin’ a little gal of his own, an’ her ma an’ her dyin’, an’ him bein’ reckless ever sence. He’ll be sober for six months now. He’s a queer one, anyhow.”

When morning came and Huldah climbed out of the wagon, she gazed in open-mouthed surprise at the stockings and the wagon wheel below them. In one stocking was the great doll she and Bertha had so wished they might buy the night before, and in one of the bundles



were the dishes Bertha had said little Nell would "most go crazy over." In the bottom of the stocking were twenty-five shining gold dollars in a buckskin purse, while in the bundles were many good and useful things.

They had not had such a breakfast for months, and Huldah said she should be able to get up a "real Christmas dinner." But in the midst of her preparations for it the good woman who had invited them to the church the night before, found her way down to the wagon and took them to her own comfortable little house, and that was the end of their wanderings for that winter.

A place for Huldah was found in one of the stores, and the kindly disposed people of the town, with true Southern hospitality, helped them in so many ways that the hardships of the past were soon forgotten in what they regarded as the most wonderful prosperity of the present.



# ROBERT NIX DESERTER

**I**T was a rough cabin home, squatting, as if to hide its squalor, in a straggling grove of scrubby oaks. Its outside appearance denoted thriftless poverty. The tumble-down cow-sheds the dilapidated corn-crib, the broken fence, with its corners choked with briars, and the dragging gate, told of a shiftless master.

Its interior, however, presented a different aspect. The rough board floor was scrubbed white; the scant furniture was scrupulously clean, while the pots and pans and the little store of crockery were as bright as soap and water and busy fingers could make them.

The immaculate whiteness of the drapery, arranged with a certain grace, spoke as plainly



to the credit of the mistress, as the outside did to the discredit of the master.

Sam Nix and his wife were an ill-mated pair. They had nothing in common, except the hard fortune that linked their lives together and poverty. He was hard, uncouth, cold; she, gentle, refined, and sweet. Not even in regard to their children were they sympathetic, for while she loved them both devotedly, and especially her bright-eyed, manly boy, he cared hardly so much for his son as he did for his favorite hound.

It was in the spring of 1863, the third year of the war. The first wild storm of passion that swept over the land had exhausted itself, and men, furiously blind before, had begun to realize the danger, the dread, and the horrors of war.

Many men who in the delirium of a patriotic frenzy had rushed to the field, impatient of its tardy glories, had found the reality of its duties



stern, unsentimental; and not a few, even of the bravest, were, to tell the truth, homesick.

Among those whose devotion to his State was the first to take fire and the first to evaporate was one George Cahoule, a young man, the proud, petted son of a proud, but not wealthy father.

From the time he could cry, his every whim, that the foolish fondness of his mother and the moderate means of his father could gratify, had been indulged. Accordingly, when, catching something of the spirit of patriotism that excited the breasts of braver and better men, he offered to volunteer, as soft a place as possible was obtained for him. Not much could be done, however; only a non-commissioned officer's berth was secured. But he took that, and in high feather marched away, a commissary-sergeant in the Thirty-Fourth Regiment of Ohio Volunteers,

For a time he found life in the camp a pleasing



routine of light duties. But after a while the restraint of the service began to vex him, and he longed for the abounding freedom of home.

Then came the battle of Stone River, and though he was safe in the rear with the cooking utensils, an erratic shell came screeching through the tree-tops dangerously near his precious head, and he wrote at once to his mother to arrange, if possible, for his discharge.

“This thing is getting to be a bore, any way,” he wrote, “and is no longer a place for a gentleman. There are poor trash enough to do the fighting; they are fit for nothing else, and I don’t see the use of a gentleman wasting his time or endangering his health for nothing. Tell father to send me a substitute right away.”

But a substitute was not so easily found. The conscription act, enrolling every white male citizen between the ages of eighteen and forty-five, had been passed and was being rigidly enforced, and where every man had to answer for



himself, there was no one to answer for poor George Cahoule.

“But there is old Nix’s boy; couldn’t they take him? He is not of age yet, but is large enough to pass,” suggested the anxious mother. “I am sure he is better able to stand it than poor dear George.”

“Yes, he will do—a fine, strapping lad. I will see old Nix and give him two hundred dollars to let him go, if only for sixty days, and then we can rope him in for good,” said the old gentleman.

Nix needed the money, and when to the two hundred dollars was added ten pounds of fine plug tobacco and a herd of goats that ran on the mountain behind his lots, the bargain was made, and the unloving wretch went home to prepare his son for the sacrifice.

Robert Nix, the boy, not yet fifteen, was not unwilling to go. With the enthusiasm of youth he had read of the battles, and wished himself



a man that he might share in their glories. His mother, however, and his sister, were not so enthusiastic, and with unavailing tears protested against the cruel bargain.

“If he had to go, if his country needed him, if it was to fill his own place, I would not mind it. I would be proud to give my boy to my State, but to go as a substitute—a hireling slave—to take the place of this cowardly Cahoule is a dishoner, and I cannot bear it!”

“Yes, but I need the money, and I’ve got the terbacker, and I’ll git the goats; and it’s only for sixty days anyhow, so it’s no use a-kicking up. Get his clothes ready by day after tomorrow. I’ve got him a new hat and a pair of shoes, and you can patch up the balance. Judge Cahoule will go with him, himself, so that settles it!”

The mother wiped her eyes, and choking back her feelings as well as she could, went busily to work to arrange for his going.



The next day after, Judge Cahoule came by in his buggy for the boy. The mother, making the best of the cruel circumstances, had tricked him out in his smartest clothes, and as he stood arrayed in his best, a military jacket, blue jean trousers with a broad stripe down the legs, and the jaunty new hat, he looked a splendid specimen of young American manhood.

“Be a good boy, Robbie,” said his mother to him, “and don’t forget mother.” Then she kissed him and let him go.

The army was encamped in the wintry woods around Shelbyville. The prospect was cold and dreary enough, but the novelty of the scene, together with the cheery bursts of martial music from the bands, had a charm for the boy, and when he was brought before the colonel of the regiment for muster, he tried his best to look every inch a soldier.

When questioned as to his age he hesitated a moment, but remembering his mother, he an-



swered, a little timidly, as if ashamed of his youth, "I shall be fifteen next March."

"He is too young, Judge Cahoule. I am very sorry, but it would be unlawful to enlist him, and especially as a substitute for a strong, able-bodied man," said the colonel.

"Ah, but he is well-grown, active as a cat, healthy, and true grit," insisted the judge.

"I will venture this much, as a personal favor to you and to George: I will muster him in for sixty days and give George a furlough for that time," compromised the colonel.

"Very well; a half-loaf is better than none," acquiesced the judge, and Robert Nix was duly enrolled and ordered to duty in Company C, while George Cahoule, shaking off the shackles of the army, hurried back home on the next train, to tell to admiring ears the wonderful stories of battle.

The sixty days were soon out, and George Cahoule was resolved not to return to the army.



Nix needed money, as he always did, and an offer of one thousand dollars was sufficient to persuade him to let Robert stay in the army. He went himself with the judge to headquarters to assure the colonel that it was all right and that he gave his consent. So the substitute was made permanent; Robert Nix was enlisted, and George Cahoule was discharged.

The spring and summer campaign opened. Bragg retreated back to Chattanooga, sullenly giving way, inch by inch, while Rosecrans as stubbornly followed. During this time Robert Nix stood to his post like a veteran. On the toilsome march by day, or the lonely, watchful picket-post at night, he never once failed. A brave, handsome boy, he became the pride of his comrades, and a pet with his captain.

But an evil day came, a day of battle, of death and of mourning,—Chickamauga, the dark “river of death.”

On Friday skirmishing began, on Saturday





“ ‘ Yes, but I need the money and I’ve got the terbacker.  
and I’ll git the goats.’ ”







afternoon the battle opened, and on Sunday morning, a calm Sabbath morning, both armies were marshaled in line, face to face, ready to cast the fateful die.

Up to that time, the last critical moment, Robert Nix had stood in line, elbow to elbow with the foremost file, and then he disappeared, silently, mysteriously, no one remembered when or how.

It was not until roll-call after the battle that he was missed.

"He was in line when we started; he must have been killed," was the report of the orderly-sergeant.

It was nearly two months afterward when a guard arrived from Columbus with a squad of prisoners, deserters arrested at home by the conscript cavalry, and brought back for trial.

Among these, with a puzzled look of innocence in his eyes, was Robert Nix.

Without explanation he was sent to the guard-



house, and charges of desertion in the face of the enemy were preferred against him. In the regular routine of events a court-martial was convened and he was duly arraigned.

There is little ceremony and still less sentiment about a military court. War itself is a barbarism and all its adjuncts are cruel. But little mercy, then, could be expected from a court in which the responsibility of conscience was divided, and could be shifted to other shoulders. Slight chance was there for the youth and artless frankness of the prisoner to avail him in the trial.

The judge-advocate was a lawyer, with all a lawyer's instincts for distorting the evidence to suit his case. But the evidence needed no distortion, it was fatally plain and to the point.

Lientenant Snow testified that the prisoner, private Robert Nix, was present in line of battle on the morning of September the 20th, 1863, and that before or during the engagement that day he disappeared, without leave or authority,



and was not heard of again until he was brought back to his command, under guard.

Sergeant Bliss, acting orderly of Company C, with a soldier's bluntness of diction, corroborated the lieutenant's statement.

Captain Earle, of the conscript service, testified, "that, having been advised by Judge Cahoule, a citizen of Ohio, of the prisoner's whereabouts, he proceeded to the house, and after a strategic investment of the premises, he succeeded in arresting him, and finding him without leave of absence or written order, he securely tied him, and brought him back to the front."

This closed the testimony for the judge-advocate.

"Now, sir, what have you got to say?" asked the president of the court.

"If you please, sir, here's a paper Mr. Phil Wood wrote for me, and told me to give it to you," presenting a closely written scrawl.



The president read it. It was a fatal confession of guilt, and appeal to the clemency of the court.

The president was a just man, though somewhat callous, and seeing the ignorance of the prisoner, tore the paper into shreds, without submitting it to his court.

"This paper does not affect the case in the least. You must answer me now for yourself. How old are you?" he asked.

"I shall be fifteen in March."

"How came you in the army?"

"My papa hired me to Judge Cahoule, to take the place of his son, Mr. George Cahoule."

"Did you want to come?"

"Yes, sir, for a little while; I only come for sixty days, to give Mr. George a furlough."

"And when the time was up, you went home."

"Oh, no, sir; Mr. Cahoule gave papa a thousand dollars to make me stay all the time. I begged to go home, but Colonel Mitchell said



my papa had a right to do as he pleased with me, and I had to stay."

"Well, what made you run away from Chickamauga?"

"I didn't run, sir," with a proud flush and an unconscious straightening up.

"How did you get away, then?"

"I was shot, sir, and I hopped back on my gun to the hospital, and the doctor sent me off to Ringgold, on a wagon."

"You say you were shot?"

"Yes, sir, I was shot in the leg, I can show you the scar."

"Let us see it."

The prisoner rolled up his trousers, and displayed an ugly scar in the calf of his left leg.

"That will do. Now tell me how it happened that none of your command saw you?"

"Well, I'll tell you all about it. You see we wanted water, all of us, and when we was standing in line, waiting for the word, I asked





Captain Rich if I mought-n't run back and get adrink, and he told me yes, to make haste and get back, and so I run back as hard as ever I could; but the creek was funder than I thought, and afore I got back, the fight had begun and the regiment was gone, and the provost guard they picked me up and put me in a squad with Trigg's Indiana regiment, and we

"I just hobbled on." sailed in, and the first thing I knowed I felt my leg knocked out from under me, and when I tried to get up I fell and found that I was shot, and the major of the regiment told me to get back if I could, and if I couldn't, to holler for the litter-bearers.

"But I could hop by using my gun, and so I



just hobbled back, and I didn't run a step. I wouldn't 'a' run like a coward for to save my life, for my mamma told me never to do that. You may shoot me if you want to, but I ain't no coward."

"You say Captain Rich told you to go after water?"

"Yes, sir, he did."

"Where is Captain Rich?"

"He's dead. sir, He was killed that day, if he was alive he would tell you so."

"Well, but how did you get home, and how was it that the conscript cavalry got you?"

"Well, I'll tell you. You see, when I got to Ringgold they put me on the cars and sent me along with the other wounded, to Columbus, and from there they sent me to Springfield, and as we was a-passing Tuckertown, I thought I'd just get off and get out home. It was only five miles, and so I got off; the boys helped me, and Mr. Mims sent ma out home in his buggy."



"And when you got well, why didn't you come back?"

"Well, I was a-coming, and I went to Springfield, and Major Calhoun give me transportation back, and I come on back as far as Tuckertown, and only stopped a day, to run out home to get a coat my mamma was a-making me, and a poke of rations she was a-cooking for me, and that very same night the cavalry come and arrested me and tied me like a runaway nigger and brought me back, without even letting me get my vittles or my coat."

"Well, is that all?"

"Yes, sir, all as I knows; only if Captain Rich hadn't 'a' got killed, I wouldn't 'a' been in this fix."

"You say Major Calhoun gave you transportation from Springfield back to the army?"

"Yes, sir, he did."

"Where is it?"

"It's at home in my 'tother briches' pocket. If you'll write to mamma, she will send it to you."



"No, never mind, that will do. Gentlemen have you any questions to ask?"

"No."

The prisoner was marched back to the guard-house, and the court proceeded to make a verdict.

There was no discussion, each member of the court being simply asked, "What say you, is the prisoner guilty or not guilty?"

It is the rule, in all military courts, for the junior officer in rank to vote first, and then the next, in an ascending scale. This is done, that the opinions of the seniors may not affect the judgment of the juniors. The vote is *viva voce*, and as one by one was asked, the answers came, "Guilty."

"The verdict is unanimous as to the guilt of the prisoner. Now, gentlemen, we will pass upon the sentences."

This matter involved a long discussion, a majority contending for the whipping on the



bare back, in the presence of his command, and branding in palm of his right hand with the letter D.

To this the president dissented.

“No, gentlemen,” he said, “there is but one adequate punishment for the offence of desertion in the face of the enemy, and that is death.

“If this boy is guilty, as you say he is, let him be shot. If he is innocent, as I feel in my soul he is, he should go free. Having found him guilty, our duty is to sentence according to the findings, and the penalty for this offence is death. The rest we can leave to the commanding general.”

So poor Robbie Nix was condemned to be shot to death, “at such time and place as the commanding general may designate.”

The president, bluff old General Zachery, added to the official report, “In consideration of the extreme youth of the prisoner, the manifest illegality of his enlistment, and his uniform good conduct as a soldier, previous to this offence,



I respectfully commend him to the mercy of the commanding general, and would ask that he be discharged from custody and remanded to the regiment for duty."

The finding of the court was not to be made known, until the action of the general was returned, but in some way it leaked out, and flew, with the instinct of bad news, to the ears of the mother at home.

For a few moments, after hearing it, she stood dazed, then, creeping in to her room, she knelt by her bed, and poured out her sorrow in tears and sobs and prayers.

At last, gathering her womanly courage with her womanly wits, she arose and commenced a hurried preparation for a journey.

"But where'll you get the money, Harry?" asked her husband, as she told him of her purpose.

"I will sell the cow. That will be enough to carry me there."

"But how'll you get back?"



“If I can save my child, I can walk back; but if they murder my darling, I shall not care ever to come back; I shall pray to die, too.”

The cow was driven to the village and readily sold, and on the next train the heart-broken mother was on her way to offer her own life for the life of her son.

She was a timid woman, modest and reserved, but her great anxiety made her courageous. Arrived at Fredericksburg, around which place the army was encamped, she made her way to the regimental headquarters, and received from the colonel a confirmation of the story. He told her that the matter was in the hands of General Grant, first, and as a last resort in the hand of President Lincoln, and offered to go with her to the general.

It was late in the day, but there were no “office hours” in the army. If they could reach headquarters before the general retired, they would be in time.



They found him at supper.

“Will the lady eat something?” was the hospitable invitation.

“No, thanks. I came to tell you of my son. There is some mistake, a cruel mistake, I know. My boy is not a coward. He is not a deserter. I don’t know what they proved against him. but it is false that he ran away from the field of battle and came home without leave. He was wounded, sir, badly shot in the leg, I know, for I nursed him myself. If you will see him, sir, and let him tell you, you will know the truth, for I have taught him not to tell a lie, even to save his own life.”

“Ah, but who is it? I do not know to whom you refer,” said the general, puzzled at the lady’s earnestness.

“My son, Robert Nix, whom they have falsely accused of desertion, and condemned to be shot.”

“General Brent, do you know anything of the



case?" turning to his adjutant-general and chief-of-staff.

"I have had it under review to-day. It is a peculiar case, and I intended calling your attention to it in the morning," answered General Brent.

"We will go through it now. My good lady you must wait here, until I examine the matter."

"Oh, sir, I beg that you will let me explain"—she interrupted.

"No, be seated here. If I need you I will call you."

The poor lady sank down on a camp-stool, and as the general went into his office with his adjutant, she slipped to her knees, and in silent prayer awaited the issue.

She had not long to wait, although it seemed an age to her. The general himself came back, holding in his hand an order.

"You tell me that your son was wounded?"

"As God will judge me in the day I stand



before Him, I tell you the truth. He came home to me wounded in the leg."

"And this story he told the court is true?"

"I know not what he told the court, only this, if he told anything at all, he told the truth."

"Madam, I believe you and I believe him. Here is an order for his release. I will send an orderly with you to the guard, or else have him conducted to you at your quarters; perhaps that would be best."

"No, no, let me go to my son where he is. And, oh, sir, I do wish I was able to thank you, but I am not, my heart is too full. God bless"—and too much overcome for further speech, she could only seize the general's hand and kiss it.

Then, almost tottering with the burden of her joy, she followed the orderly to the guard-house, bearing the little slip of paper which saved his life and his honor.



# THE SENTINEL of LIVE OAKS

THERE'S never been anything in my life just regular," said Eliza. She was perched on the top rail of a fence, while a little old lady in hooped gown, lace shawl, and wide hat with a tilting veil, stood beside her listening with pleased interest.

"To begin with," continued Eliza, chewing a wisp of her long fair hair, "I told you we used to live below here in a 'mesh' country, and eight of us children and pa and ma died of malaria, one after another. 'Pears to me there was always somebody sick in the back room. I, being the littlest, couldn't get so many shakes in my system as they had, and I wasn't dead, but got to be a orphan at ten years old.

"That was three years ago. Then Uncle



Beach took me, and I couldn't read nor write. He was squatting on your brother's land where you lived all your days, and you saw me, 'n' got int'rested and taught me. I tell you, Miss Vane, I'd lay down my life for you!"

"You must not talk that way; it is wicked," said Miss Vane, promptly. "I suppose, though, it's just your earnest way of speech. Now don't kiss my hand, Eliza; that is not pretty at all. Why, the other day you were kissing my gown. You make me feel like a heathen idol."

"I love you just to death!" cried Eliza, her big blue eyes glowing, her thin little face bright and eager. "Before you took int'rest in me, I settled down to be poor white trash like the rest. The Beaches didn't like me as well as their children, 'cause I wasn't their own folks, but an orphan. But that last year at the manor house with you has been just beautiful, like I dreamed it.

"I knowed it wouldn't last. I said to myself



—when you came for me and said the slaves is all gone, and you'd pay Uncle Beach for my services—I just said, 'Lizer Jackson, it aren't true; you're a-makin' b'lieve all this!'

"Sure enough, now it's gone! I heerd the soldiers was coming, and when I see the man with the buggy driving up, I knowed the Cap'n had sent for you, and I run away down here to cry it out."

She ended with a stifled sob.

"But the very idea!" cried Miss Vane, fretfully. "To leave the house and all my things that have been in our family over a hundred years, and all my brother's wife's belongings—"

"She that died the bride of a year," put in Eliza, mournfully. She had heard the story so often that it was quite real to her.

"Yes, and all my mother's treasures. Just a few hours to get ready in, and no room to take anything. Just like a man to say, 'Give things up—it can't be helped!' Who will put pans



under the leaks when it rains, or air the rooms or keep the doors locked, and feed the hens? A woman can't give up so easily. O Eliza, it breaks my heart! I am not afraid of the soldiers. The ships will go up the river, and never see Live-Oaks at all. They've something better to do than to rob old women."

"Talking makes it wuss," said Eliza, promptly. "We'll go back and pack the things. When I heard you calling, I felt a chill—a real creepy one. I knew you'd got to go, and I'd woke up from dreaming I lived in the manor."

She helped Miss Vane up the avenue to the big white house, with its pillared portico, green blinds and general air of desolation and decay. It was hidden from the traveling road by a grove, and from the river by a great avenue of live-oaks that led down to the water's edge.

The estate had been in the Vane family nearly a century, but for years the fortunes of the race had been failing, and Captain Vane and his



sister had barely sufficient to live upon—not enough to keep up the old place.

The ships of the Union navy were coming up the river, and the families along the shore were hastily abandoning their homes. Miss Vane's preparations for departure were soon made, and very tearful and complaining, the old lady was helped into the buggy.

Her modest bundle of clothes followed; then a package of the family silver, a few old relics, and a basket containing the cat. She bade Eliza return to her uncle's, and if she stayed, to keep an eye on the house.

"If the soldiers don't rob the house, tramps will. 'Taint but twenty-five miles from N'Orleans, and lots of 'em will be comin' this way," said the driver, "so you might as well say good-bye to everything."

Too much overcome to speak, Miss Vane could only wave her wrinkled hand in farewell.

Eliza sat on the doorstep in the twilight, a



pathetic little figure. A damp wind off the river soughed through the oaks, waving the long palls of moss. In the dim light some of the trees took on queer shapes of gigantic hags, with streaming gray hair and black, waving arms. In the deserted house, floors creaked, doors jarred, and the stairway sounded as if pressed by ghostly feet.

Then there came the rattle of wheels. Eliza, hiding behind a pillar, saw her uncle and his family go by in their big wagon, dragging a cow tied behind, and a yellow dog following. Supposing the girl had gone with Miss Vane, her uncle did not look toward the manor at all.

"They're running away, too," said Eliza. "They'd take me if I hollered. But I'm going to stay and set them drip pans, air the mold off things, and feed the hens. I'm going to pay Miss Vane for that teachin'. Soldiers is men anyway, an' maybe has girls of their own. I ain't afraid."



She opened the great oak door, stepped into the dim hall, and went toward the stairs. On her way she patted the big clock, which was nearly twice as tall as she.

“You’re such a lively one,” she said; “your tick-tock is real company!”

Up to her own room—the tiny one opening out of Miss Vane’s—she climbed, and after saying her prayers went peacefully to sleep. The moon rose over the long avenue of live-oaks, traced graceful leaf-shadows on the shelly walks, turned the old manor to a palace of marble, and touched with kindly light the sleeping face of the sentinel of Live-Oaks.

All the next day the child worked, hiding away under the eaves and in the cellar Miss Vane’s treasures, and at night climbing the stairs, a shrinking, solitary figure. Few men would care to stay alone in such an eerie place as that old house, in the midst of a region overrun with lawless camp-followers and hiding



negroes. The child, knowing little, feared less. And Live-Oaks, indeed, escaped robbery, probably because it was so far from a travelled road.

All those days the air resounded with the far-away roar of cannon, like distant thunder. The sentinel heard it, but went about her labors of love unmoved.

The second day of her watch she brought up to the head of the stairs, with great difficulty, a suit of armor. It was so mounted that it looked like a big man, and during Eliza's first visits to the manor, it had been a source of extreme terror to her. Now, however, it gave her a sense of companionship and protection. Before she locked her door she called out good-night to the comforting figure in armor.

One moonlight night a skulking figure crossed the fields. It was a black man in search of plunder. He noted the quiet house, and stealthily climbed the portico, swinging himself up by the stout old vines. Then he peered cautious-



ly in at the hall window, which seemed an easy way to enter. His very wool stiffened as his wild eyes beheld a great figure in shining armor and helmet with visor down, in the moonlit room. His excited fancy gave it a slow and stately motion. He fled for his life; and the little sentinel never dreamed of his presence.

The sixth night of Miss Vane's absence was close and hot. Eliza, leaning from a window, saw a great glow in the sky.

"Mebbe it's jest a fire in N'Orleans," she muttered. "Or p'r'aps it's judgment day—everything's changing so. It smells smoky, too. If it's life everlasting come, I can't be in no better place then here, taking care of them fam'ly relics for her I love more'n all the world."

Secure in her simple faith, she went to her bed. All that next day she saw from a hiding-place, near the bank, great majestic ships go up the stream toward the city that had burned its stores the night before.



“They’re going! They’re going!” Eliza cried. “They haven’t seen our house at all, and Miss Vane kin come home!”

She ran to the house and began a furious putting to rights. She baked a large loaf of corn-meal bread—she had only meal—and tried in her childish way to have everything as Miss Vane would have wished. At night, quite exhausted with her efforts, she sat down on the steps to rest, leaning her head against one of the fluted columns. “I ain’t ’fraid ’t all,” she said; “being brave jest comes nateral after a while.”

Was that queer noise the wind? That faint, far-away moan?

“If I was afraid, I’d just run in the house and slam the door,” sighed poor Eliza. “That’s a sure ’nuff groan. If the Beaches was here they’d be scared outer their wits.”

In the gray light, under the live-oaks, the stooping, limping figure of a man made his way



from tree to tree. He staggered on, and then fell at the steps. When he opened his dazed eyes he saw, by the light of a lantern, a child's pale, earnest face.

"I knowed ye, Cap'n Vane! I respected you'd come home cried," Eliza, "and if you'll just try a little, I'll h'ist ye inter the house."

"Who are you?" he asked, when he had reached the hall, where, unable to move him further, she made him a comfortable bed.

"You ain't been home of late, or you'd seen me," she answered. "I'm the poor white trash your sister teached. I'm takin' care of her prop'ty for her."

She dressed his wounds as he directed, and was such a careful nurse that he grew better rapidly.

"I reckon you're picking up," she said, one morning, as she brought him his breakfast. "But if I kills all the chickens for you, what'll Miss Vane eat when she comes? She's so dre'ful pertikler 'bout her victuals."



“Don’t kill any more,” he laughed. “What a brave child you are! Why, I wouldn’t like to stay alone in this ghostly place.”

“Being a orphan and having your relations sorter pick on you makes you ’customed to being lonesome,” said Eliza, soberly, “and I do take such comfort in takin’ care of her things like she wanted, and I’ve hid them relics of her arncesters where even soldiers can’t find ’em. I hain’t really had no time to be scared.”

One night, two days later, a sudden storm came up, and Eliza, mindful of the leaky roof, rose from her bed to set the pans. She opened the hall window to look at the rain, so that she might judge of the number of pans required; and then it was that she heard voices and the thud of horses’ hoofs.

Quick as a flash she ran to Captain Vane’s room. He was sleeping on his sofa, in readiness to depart in the dawn, for he was in the enemy’s territory.



“What shall I do?” he cried. “They are Union soldiers, and will make me a prisoner. There is no time to escape.”

“Hide in the figger there; I’ve done it!” said Eliza. “There’s lots of room. They’ll think it’s only a tin man.”

Thundering knocks jarred the door, echoing through the house.

“The place is deserted,” said a voice.

“What is it?” called Eliza, from the hall window.

“Soldiers seeking shelter. If you don’t open the door we’ll break it down.”

“They’ve come, they’ve come!” wept the child. “They’ll spile her things! What shall I do? They break everything! I’ll let you in if you won’t hurt things, misters,” she called.

“That’s cool,” laughed a man. “Break in the door!”

But before he finished the door was suddenly opened, revealing the figure of a small girl in a



queer calico wrapper. She held a candle in one trembling hand, and with the other pushed the long, fair hair out of her eyes.

Seven blue-coated soldiers crowded into the hall, looking at her with amsued interest.

"Are you the sentinel?" one asked.

"I'm taking care of Miss Vane's prop'ty," said the child, bravely. "Her brother made her go 'way an' leave all the family relics, and they can't never git no more, 'cause she and him is old an' hasn't no money even to put a new roof on. Mebbe some of you has girls like me,



"She held a candle."



and you wouldn't want'er be mean, on that account. And all Cap'n Vane's wife's things, she the bride of a year, is jest as she left 'em, even her work-basket, an' you wouldn't hurt them things, I'm sure! You see I wasn't no 'count till Miss Vane teached me. Our folks is poor whites, but she's quality."

"You can't make me believe you've stayed in this old barracks alone," said a soldier, gruffly. "I'll stay here and watch. The rest of you go over the house."

He questioned her in a kindly way when the rest had lighted all her precious candles and gone about the house.

But she had suddenly become silent. If they should find Miss Vane's brother! She might say something wrong if she opened her lips, so she placed one trembling hand over her mouth to make herself silent.

She heard the soldiers clattering over head, slamming doors, and knocking furniture about.



Then they trooped back, and one man hit the armored figure a sounding blow as he passed.

"A fine old chap," he said, carelessly. The child's heart gave a sudden leap as she drew a quick breath of relief.

They went out into the kitchen and pantry, and returned with the meagre store of eggs and corn bread. They spread this meal on the parlor table, and put their muddy feet on the faded satin chairs.

"I kin git them mud marks off the parlor chairs," said Eliza, anxiously, "but them crumbs on the carpet is just awful!"

Every man laughed good-naturedly. Then all put down their feet, and took pains not to drop their food.

"She's an older maid than the old one with the cork-screw curls in the picture there," said a gray-bearded man. "I never saw such an odd one. I hope, sis, the time will come when the two of you can be living here in comfort, in single state, with forty cats apiece."



At dawn they rode away, and the wearied Captain Vane came out of his hiding-place.

“Eliza,” he said, as he took up his bundle of provisions and his cane to aid his slow departure, “I’m off now. A friend of mine will see me down the river. I want you to keep these papers. I have willed my property to you when my sister is done with it. She is the only one of my family left, but the old place will be in worthy hands. When my sister dies you will be her heir. You saved the relics; and one relic of the line—the last of the name—will be grateful to his life’s end.”

He crossed the threshold for the last time, and with one farewell glance disappeared down the avenue, under the old oak trees that would shade the master of Live-Oaks never again. He fell in Virginia, and was buried there.

“He said I could go to N’Orleans,” muttered the child, “and he’d give me money, and put me in some folks’s care; but I ain’t goin’ to give up





“‘I tell you, Miss Vane, I’d lay down my life for you.’”







now, if it is so lonesome. Cur'us how skeery 'tis when folks has been here and gone! Mebbe I'm gittin' to see things like loonytics, for there's been a something moving in them trees for ten minutes. I don't care what I sees—I'm just goin' ter be gritty and stay and take care of her things, for she'll come back, I'm sure. She's come!" shrieked the child, darting down the avenue. "That's her I know, and the very basket she took the cat away in!"

A queer little bent figure in a calico gown and sun-bonnet approached the house in a stealthy way.

"You blessed child, are you here?" cried Miss Vane, bursting into happy tears. "And I all the way dreading to be alone here, and bringing the cat for company! But I made up my mind, war or no war, I'd come back and take care of my property. Every time it rained I couldn't sleep for worrying, and I've been three days on my journey here—I'm so slow-footed.



I borrowed the cook's gown and bonnet, and dearie me! I've slept in the woods, so I can hardly drag myself with rheumatism."

"All the things is safe," cried Eliza. "The soldiers come, but they only ate the food and greased the carpet a little, and they didn't catch Cap'n Vane neither, for he hid in the tin image and they never respected it! You come up and set down, and I'll tell you all about it, and where the relics is hid; and what a sight of company the cat will be! I wisht so that day you'd left it, but I was 'fraid if you thought I was goin' to stay here alone you'd stay; and if you was killed it would be all my fault—me that just worships the ground you walks on!"

Eliza, kneeling at Miss Vane's side, related all her adventures. The cat, curled up in its mistress's lap, purred a soft accompaniment.

"Don't you ever say poor white trash again," interrupted Miss Vane. "You are going to belong to my family now. You and I will take



care of the old place—maybe live on it many peaceful years—and I sha’n’t forget, Eliza, what you’ve done for me, nor my joy at seeing you here. I don’t see how you could have stood it.”

“I reckon ’cause I was a orphan,” said Eliza.





# *Lieutenant Stanton's* **ESCAPE**

**I**T was on the evening of St. Valentine's day, February 14, 1865, that Lieut. Frederic Stanton, of the Pennsylvania Cavalry, climbed over the wall of Camp Asylum, the Confederate military prison near Columbia, South Carolina. He had contrived to escape during an unusual shifting of the prisoners, who were to be moved to a distant place as soon as possible, for Sherman was not far away, and the men in gray meant to hold their prisoners beyond Sherman's reach.

Cold, sleety rain was falling in torrents, and the wind was a gale. The guards were looking for Stanton with flaring torches before he had fairly jumped down, but they did not know precisely where he had climbed up. He lay



breathless and exhausted, for he was weak and fatigued by his climbing, within two hundred yards of the wall, until he saw the lights of the guards on his trail.

"I reckon that Yank has done got away," said one.

Stanton heard the words so distinctly that he believed the pursuers nearer to him than they were. He rose and ran again. His hope was to "make Sherman," though his strength was not enough to take him far.

From Camp Asylum to the northeast lay a comparatively open space, with but few houses. The railroad was in this direction, and Stanton's idea was to reach it and follow it until daylight, then secrete himself and await events.

He believed that General Kilpatrick's blue cavalry would soon be in Columbia. He knew that Gen. Wade Hampton's gray cavalry were scouting the country, but he was confident that he could detect the presence of a mounted man



before the mounted man could see him. There were no street-lights in Columbia, and certainly no citizens would be abroad in a night like that.

The young lieutenant reached the main road, and stared north toward the railroad at the best pace he could make in the mud and darkness. No lights were visible in any of the houses, and not even a dog barked. He had gone nearly a mile, when he stumbled headlong and rolled down an embankment. The road had narrowed as it approached a bridge, and in the darkness he had missed it and fallen into a gully.

As he groped around in the darkness he found the abutments of the bridge, and crawled under the superstructure to escape the pelting storm while he should recover his breath. There his foot struck something soft that screamed and sobbed, "O-o-o mammy! mammy!"

The cavalryman jumped back. Had the



familiar sound of "Halt, there!" sounded in his ears, it would not have scared him so badly.

"Who are you? What are you?" he stammered.

The answer was "O-o mammy!" and bitter sobbing.

"Some poor little lost darky," thought Stanton, and he said aloud, "Sho', sho,' don't cry, little chap! Nobody'll hurt you."

In the darkness he could barely discern the child. He touched it, and it screamed in terror but he grasped it firmly, speaking soothing words, and passed his hand over it. Its head was covered with long silky hair; its dress was very wet, and it was barefooted.

"A little white girl!" said Stanton in astonishment. "How on earth, child, did you ever get here?"

The only answer was sobs, and a fearful chattering of teeth with a croupy cough. The child was in great need of immediate attention.



"Now here's a pretty mess!" said Stanton. "What on earth am I to do? This young one will choke to death with the croup or perish with cold before morning if I leave her here; if I take her to a house, I am sure to be recaptured. How on earth did she ever get here, anyway? Just my blamed luck! Well, if she dies, it's none of my affairs—but no, I can't leave her here to die, poor little thing!" for the tiny girl was whooping and choking fearfully.

He thought of a large house he had passed. "I could take her there and leave her, and then run," he said to himself. So he gathered the little one in his arms, and wrapped her in the piece of old shelter tent that he had over his shoulders.

With his choking, crying burden he staggered through the storm to a large house whose outline he had seen vaguely in the darkness. Having groped his way through the shrubbery that surrounded the mansion, he saw a faint light



glimmering through the blinds of an upper window. With the old-fashioned knocker on the front door he raised a rattling alarm.

From the window above him came the voice of an old colored aunty: "Who dar? Wha' yo' want?"

"A lost little child is here. I found her under the bridge. She has the croup, and needs immediate attention."

"We'se ain' los' no chillen. G'way fum yere!" said the aunty, sternly.

"But this little child will surely die if she is not attended to right away. Don't be afraid; no one will hurt you. Can't you hear for yourself?" for the child was chocking badly.

"Dat's sho'ly de croup. Wait a minute."

Stanton soon heard the sound of footsteps in the hall and the agitated voices of ladies; apparently they were greatly alarmed.

"Who are you, sir, and why do you come to my house at this hour of the night?" demanded a lady through the closed door



"I am a Union officer, madam. I found this little child under the bridge, and I have brought her here as it is the nearest house. I will leave as soon as I place her in your keeping," said Stanton, and the little one, crying and choking, seemed to corroborate his story.

"He speaks like a gentleman," said a soft, sweet voice inside.

"Open the door, Rose," said the other lady.

The big key grated in the old lock, the door opened a little, and by the light of a flickering candle, held by a stout colored woman, Stanton saw a pleasant-faced, middle-aged lady, a pretty young lady, holding with both hands a big cavalry sabre, and a boy of twelve years with a small, single-barrelled shot-gun.

The ladies saw a very wet and muddy young officer, his face blue with cold. He wore the short cavalry jacket of his service, with his lieutenant's shoulder-straps; all his clothing was very much the worse for wear. In his arms lay a very dirty, wet, drabbled little girl.



"Come in, sir," said the elder lady, sympathetically; and Stanton entered, with an amused glance at the pretty girl and the sabre, and the little boy with the shotgun. Taking off his dripping hat, he bowed low to the ladies and addressed the elder:

"This is a case of croup, madam, that requires prompt action. Probably you know better than I do what ought to be done for her."

"How did the poor little thing happen to be out on such a night?" the elderly lady asked, wonderingly.

"I do not know, madam. I never saw her until I found her under the bridge. Now that she is here, I know that you will do all that you can for her, and with your permission I will leave."

He handed the child to the colored woman, who took her, saying. "De po' lilly lamb is sho'ly bad. Gib her to ole Mammy Rose. She'll tek keer ob de po' lilly t'ing. Gwine ter



put her inter hot water an' gib her some goose-grease d'rectly."

"You must have a great desire for liberty to brave a storm like this," said the lady, as Rose disappeared with the child.

"It is the desire of my life," said Stanton. "Twice previously I escaped, only to be recaptured. It is rumored that General Kilpatrick has broken the railroad north of here. If possible, I mean to reach him."

"Yet for the sake of a poor little lost child you took the almost certain chances of recapture."

"That is true," said Stanton, "but there didn't seem to be anything else to do. If I had left the child to perish, I should have been her murderer. If a guard had tried to stop me, I would have knocked him in the head without any scruples. But a little helpless child—that's very different."

The lady looked at him curiously. "But suppose that we should detain you?"



"I do not think you will," he answered, quietly.

"Do you think that you are strong enough to travel in this storm?" she asked.

"To tell you the truth, madam," said Stanton, "I have overexerted myself in trying to get away, and I don't think that I can go far; but I will go as far as I can."

"Let him stay here, mamma! I like him! He looks like Brother Roy!" said the boy with the shotgun, impulsively.

"It would seem like murder to turn any human being out of the house in this storm," said the young lady. Stanton gave her a grateful look, but said nothing.

"Lientenant," said the mistress, "I have a proposition to make to you. You are a brave man and a gentleman; your actions this night have shown it. As my boy has said, you look like my oldest son, Roy. I place him in your position, and try to think what I would wish a



Northern woman to do for him under similar circumstances. Your General Sherman and his army will certainly be in Columbia in a few days. I will hide you here in this house until the United States troops are in the city, and I hope you will then try to obtain for me a guard, that my home may not be despoiled of what little we have left."

Stanton reflected for a moment. "Is there any good reason why you should not have a guard?" he asked.

"There is not," she answered promptly. "I am Mrs. Royston; my husband is a surgeon with General Lee; my oldest son, Roy, is with Richards's South Carolina battery at Petersburg; this is my daughter Marion and my son Morris."

Stanton acknowledged the introduction in his best manner, and gave his name, rank, and regiment, and gratefully accepted the lady's offer.



"Now," said Mrs. Royston, "come into the dining-room and warm yourself."

She led the way to the dining-room, where Rose had already started a blazing fire. The ladies looked at his drenched, muddy garments, and held a whispered consultation.

"I have," said Mrs. Royston, "long ago torn up all my spare bedding for bandages for the hospitals and sent off all my blankets for our soldiers, but I have retained some of the clothing of my husband and son, to be used in case of sickness or wounds,"—the lady's voice faltered a little,—“and I think that I can give you a change; certainly you need it.”

"I shall be most grateful," said Stanton.

The ladies and boy left the room, and in a little while Morris came back with a lighted candle. "I will show you to your room," he said.

Stanton followed him to a chamber on the second floor. A fire was burning in the fire-



place, and on the bed was a change of under-clothing, a pair of pearl-colored trousers of the style of thirty years earlier, a black velvet waistcoat with goldstone buttons, and a pair of embroidered cloth slippers.

"Mamma says for you to sleep until she sends Rose to call you in the morning," said Morris. "But first she will bring you some supper as soon as she can get it ready."

"I shall be glad of that, indeed," said Stanton, "Your mother is very thoughtful; please thank her for me."

The boy bowed and went down-stairs. "I thought they said there weren't any gentlemen among the Yankees," he said to Marion.

"But you see there is one, at least," said the pretty girl.

Wash-stand, basin, water, and towels—how long since Stanton had seen them before! He was soon very much cleaner, and eyed the dry, sweet garments; he laughed as he took up the





“With his choking crying burden he staggered through the storm.”







white shirt, with its old-fashioned, high "standing dickey." "This is the first 'boiled shirt' I've had in a long time," he said to himself. He had scarcely put it on when Aunt Rose knocked at the door,

"Jes' a li'l mossel of sumpin' to eat, sah," she replied to his, "Who is there?" and she left it down on the hall floor, and went away at his request.

Stanton opened the door, brought in the food—it consisted of hoe-cake, cold chicken and pease-coffee—and ate and drank ravenously, sitting in his shirt-sleeves. Then, what with his comforted interior and an exterior warmed by the fine fire, he felt drowsy and lay down on the bed. There he rolled himself luxuriously in the cotton sheets, and went to sleep in a moment without the least misgiving.

"They are true chivalry," he said to himself, and it was, strange to say, of Miss Marion especially he was thinking as he made this reflection.



Stanton was sleeping soundly when Rose called him for breakfast. He was soon dressed, but his cavalry jacket, though he had hung it before the fire, was still so wet and dirty that he disliked to put it on over the immaculate, old-fashioned white shirt, so he decided to go down to breakfast in slippers and shirt-sleeves. Lucky resolution! As he was going down-stairs he heard the rough voices of men in the dining-room below, and Miss Marion came flying up toward him.

"O sir, don't go down; three stragglers are in the dining-room; they are ruffians, and demand breakfast and have threatened mamma. Oh, what shall we do?"

"Threatening your mamma, are they?" said Stanton, stepping farther down. Just then the dining-room door opened and he heard a rough voice, "Now, old woman, make that nigger of yourn hustle up that thar breakfast; stir yourselves, all of you."



Stanton's blood boiled.  
"Is that sabre in the hall?"  
he whispered,

Marion nodded, Stanton darted down the stairs, followed by the pretty girl. Sabre in hand he entered the dining-room. His slippered feet made no noise, and the men did not notice him until he sternly demanded, "What are you doing here? Get out of this house!"



The men turned on him, "What are you doing here?" but the flashing eyes and resolute face warned them not to approach too near the sabre.

"Who are you that's givin' orders?" asked one, surlily.

"I'll let you know who I am if you don't leave at once," said Stanton; he had instantly



noticed that they were not soldiers, but simply stragglers from the camps near the city.

One of the men looked at Stanton keenly "You talk like a Yank; I believe you are a Yank!" he said.

Quick as a flash Marion interposed: "You miserable man! How dare you insult a guest of the family of Doctor Royston?"

"Never mind, Marion," said Stanton, as if he had known her all his life. "I will attend to these fellows. Now, men," he spoke very sharply, "get out of this house at once, or there will be some heads broken," and he twirled the sabre with a practised hand.

The men recognised that moulinet—none but a trained cavalryman could swing a sabre in that manner.

"Reckon we had better go. Ax yo' pardin' majah, but we-uns hain't had much to eat lately, and we was feelin' mighty cross an' sassy like," said one of them, with a faint attempt at an apology.



“And we-uns is mos’ done out, looking all night for a little girl that’s gone astray.”

“Why, I found a little girl astray last night,” said Stanton.

And sure enough the men were seeking the very child he had saved. She was now quite cured of her croup, though still a little weak, and within half an hour was being carried to her mother, one of the many country people who had fled before Sherman’s van.

After the men, to whom Mrs. Royston gave a good breakfast, had gone away with the little girl, the family and Stanton took their morning meal, during which it was decided that the Union lieutenant had better be secreted in the attic during the day.

In the afternoon the sound of artillery was heard, and soon after Morris came in with the report that the Union prisoners had been sent off on the railroad, for General Kilpatrick had not torn up the road, as reported.



The next day there was much artillery-firing, and occasionally the crackle of musketry could be heard. On the morning of the seventeenth, clouds of smoke and the smell of burning cotton came from the city. Looking from the attic window, Stanton saw the Confederate cavalry retiring across the open ground to the northeast of the city.

He was watching them when Mrs. Royston called to him from the hall below.

"Lieutenant," she said, "come down; your friends are in the city."

Going to a front chamber window, and looking down the street, he could see in the distance the long line of glistening muskets and bayonets swaying above the solid column of marching blue. The fifes were playing shrilly and the drums rolling, and the men singing lustily the solemn "Battle-Cry of Freedom;" and tears rolled down Stanton's cheeks.



# THE FEDERAL RAIDERS

THE war was drawing to a close and we had heard but few of its terrible sounds in our farmhouse, twelve miles from the nearest village. But one day rumors came of a great army of raiders that was marching through the country, and would undoubtedly come our way.

All the fathers and grown brothers were away in the army, and these stories of raiders had an awful meaning to the frightened mothers and children, left alone in those isolated farm-houses. I felt perfectly certain in my own little mind that a "Yankee" had horns somewhere about his head,—although my own dear father was a genuine New Englander,—and that a raider was something large and black and terrible.



I will tell how the raiders came

We children had gone to school, three and a half miles through the woods to a little country school-house that stood by the side of a railroad. This was not a very important railroad to most of the world, but to the school-children it stood for a great deal. For every day, about twelve o'clock, a little engine and two cars came rolling past our school-house for us to watch and admire.

On this particular day we were having recess, as usual, at twelve o'clock, when we heard a loud long whistle from our little engine, and somehow we felt that something was the matter. We all crowded near the track and watched the little train come flying and panting along. Suddenly we saw something red waving from the back platform, and as the engine and first car whizzed past us we watched almost breathlessly to find the meaning of this strange signal.

A man stood on the end of the last car and waved a red flag toward us, shouting with all his



might, "Run home! The Yanks are comin!" Then he was gone, whirling on toward the village where his news was to spread wild excitement.

For a moment we children stood stupidly gazing down the track; and then the teacher called us in.

"Get your things on," she said, "and go home as fast as you can, and tell your mothers to get ready for the raiders."

If you have never been raided you cannot know what excitement and terror gave wings to our little feet as we scampered home through the woods. The great, quiet forest seemed full of danger; we dreaded to look either side lest we should see raiders, with their horny heads and their guns, peering out from behind the trees.

The way had never seemed so long or lonely before, and I am sure we went over it more quickly than we had ever done, even on the blithest, happiest morning. My big brother was a few feet ahead, carrying the news on the





end of his tongue, my little sister was wearily paddling along behind, and my little self was in the middle, wondering if we should ever reach home and be safe once more in mother's care.

At last we dragged ourselves through the gate and across the yard to the farmhouse. There was an air of utter loneliness about the place. Not even the dogs, seemed to be at home.

"Mother!" we shouted.  
"where are you?"

"Sakes-a-live! W'at de matter wid you chilluns?"

"O Aunt Becky!" we cried, "the raiders—the Yankees are coming—they're 'most here! Where's mother?"



Aunt Becky gasped, but lost no time.

“Moses! Charlet! you light out 'cross de branch ter Marse Zack's en tell Miss Em'ly en Miss Melie dat de raiders is hyer—bin chasin' de chillun froo de woods fum school.”

The little darkies disappeared down the road, and we waited impatiently for a sight of our mother returning.

Of course Aunt Becky's wild message had terrified mother and Aunt Melie, and they came home with a fear that some dreadful thing had happened.

But they had no time to spare. The afternoon was almost gone and many things had to be done, for we expected the raiders in the night.

You would have laughed if you had seen us hiding things. Aunt Becky took the silver under her charge, and no one ever knew where she hid it. Mother put her money-bags on under her dress-skirts. We tucked ham and potatoes and flour and the brown sugar, which was the



best we had, into the queerest places. Many of them were buried under the hay in the barn, some were stowed away in the cotton-gin house; there were even some prickly shrubs in the yard that hid some of our treasures.

By the time night had come our home looked very poor and barren. There was not a nice thing to be found anywhere. A few old books were left and a few of our poorest clothes and dishes and such things, which we thought would mislead the raiders and make them think we had nothing better, and which they would not be tempted to take away from us.

We were not at all sure that we should have a house left over our heads by the time morning came, so we watched the sun set and the darkness come, with great fear.

The darkies gathered into their cabins very early in the evening, and the cook had to have company on the way from the kitchen to the house as she brought in the supper. As bed-



time drew near, mother waited to see Aunt Becky and Charlotte start for their cabins, after they had arranged the beds. Mother dreaded to have them go, for then she would be left alone in the house with her widowed sister and the children.

After they had been sitting silent for a little while Aunt Becky said: "Charlet, I reckon yer better button dat do' en fix yer pallit. Yer don't spec' I gwine outen dis house dis night, does yer, en leave Miss Em'ly en de chillun hyer by deyse'ves?"

Mother looked glad, but said nothing, and Charlotte rose to button the door and fix her "pallit," which meant a quilt on the floor.

We children were to sleep in the next room on a trundle-bed and lounge, as we did not dare to go up stairs to our accustomed places.

"I bin primin' up de ole blunderbuss," Aunt Becky said. "Me en de muskit's got ter fight it out twixt us dis night."



She took the old rusty gun down from a nail in the dining-room, where it had hung since grandfather put it there years before, saying, as he did so, that it was "no good," To Aunt Becky it was equal to a cannon, and she brought it in with great pride and stood it near the chimney; then she sat on the floor beside it and puckered her face to make it look brave and stern.

During that long evening we talked at times; then we would sit quite still for a while, and each was trying hard not to listen to any little sound outside. But we all started if there was a flutter in the hen-house, or a neigh in the horse-lot, or a bark in the yard.

I do not know how I ever got to sleep that night, for I was never so frightened and excited in my life, but I did fall into a sound sleep and forgot all about the raiders.

About midnight we were all startled by a loud noise and a cry "Sakes-a-live! Dar dey is!"



It was true—they were there. We could hear their dreadful voices and the stamping of their horses' feet outside our gate.

“Don't you be skeered,” Aunt Becky said, faintly; “me en de muskit's hyer.”

“Hello!” they shouted at the gate, and we expected every moment that they would come right into the house, horses and all, and ride over us and then burn us.

We huddled close together in mother's room and listened to those awful “Hellos!” This was war, indeed, and our enemies were at our very gates.

“Don't be afraid, children,” mother said. “God will stay with us now.”

This must have helped Aunt Becky, for she sprang to her feet and made the one great effort of her life. She snatched the old musket from the corner, threw it over her shoulder, and before any one knew what she was doing she had unbuttoned the door and stepped on to the back



porch. It seemed so terrible to think of her facing those raiders alone and in the dark!

In an instant we heard a snap, then a bang, then a loud cry from Aunt Becky: "Dar, now, I done kilt him!" Then the musket fell to the floor and all was still on the porch. It was a tragic moment for us, and we hid our faces on the bed, too horrified to cry or speak.

"Hello there! Stop that gun or we'll fire. We don't want to fight."

There was no answer from Aunt Becky, and mother saw that somebody must speak or the raiders would be in the house in a moment. So she stepped to the door through which Aunt Becky had just passed, and said, "What do you want?"

"Where's the next 'crick'? our horses want water," was the answer.

"Follow the road straight ahead for half a mile," mother said.

There was a quick-spoken order and away





“ ‘Oh, Aunt Becky!’ we cried, ‘the Raiders!’ ”







they went. We listened to the galloping steps, the halloos and the snatches of song, as they grew fainter and fainter and at last died away.

Could it be true that the midnight raid had ended so peaceably; that nothing would happen?

Now that they were gone and Aunt Becky had not returned, we began to wonder what had become of her. We even went to the door and called her as loudly as we dared, but there was no answer. She had gone so suddenly from the porch after the musket had been fired, and there was not a trace of her that we could see or hear anywhere.

To my mind there was but one thing that could have happened to her. She had been stolen and carried off by the raiders. I sobbed out this thought to the bed-clothes, but did not tell it to any one else.

With the first light of morning we rushed from the house to rouse the darkies, and to set everybody looking for Aunt Becky. We peered under



the house, and in the inside chimney corners. I flew to the chicken-house; perhaps she had gone there to take care of the chickens; but I saw no sign of her.

Some of the darkies had even started off down the road that the raiders took, and by the time the sun came up, the whole farm was in commotion. At last, just as we were looking under the back steps for the third time, some one shouted, "Dar she is! Dar's Aunt Becky!"

Sure enough, there she was, walking slowly and stiffly along the path which led from the fields, past the cabins, to the house, Aunt Becky looked very cross and sour, and would not raise her eyes at first. But we were all so glad to see her that she could not stay cross long. Mother hurried to meet her, and said. "What's the matter, Becky? Where have you been? We've been so frightened about you."

"Is dey gone?" was the answer.

"Long ago; they didn't stay but a minute or



two after you fired. But where have you been?"

For a while Aunt Becky would not say any thing, but after a little she seated herself on the back steps, and it seemed as if every one of her bones creaked as she did so.

"Wus dey air dead sojer roun' de gate dis mawnin'?" she asked. There was a twinkle in her eyes that made us laugh. Then she went on, "W'en I got out on dat po'ch las' night, I says ter myse'f, 'Now's yer time, Becky.'

"Wid dat I riz up de ole muskit en pult de trigger. Well, honey, de bang er dat muskit wus des zackly lak jedgment day. 'Now,' I says ter myse'f, 'yer done it, Becky. Dey's er dead man out yander all longer you.' En wid dat I tuck'n start fer de fiel'. I tore' long da pa'f down pas' de fig bushes en yaller Jake's cabin, tell I got ter de wheatfiel,' den I kep' er runnin' en runnin,' en all de time de Lord wus axin' me, 'Whar 'bouts dat dead sojer, Becky?'

"I couldn't hear nuthin' but dat gun, en I



couldn't see nuthin' but de man, en all de time de Lord wuz atter me swif'er dan de win'.

“W'iles I wuz gwine on dis waya, all uv er suddint sump'n stop me. I des thought ter myse'f, ‘De Lord's done trip yer up now.’ En den I didn't know nuthin' more fer er spell. Nex' thing I knowed hit look lak I wuz layin' some'rs on de groun', en w'en I tuck er good look roun', sho nuff, dar I wuz flat on my back in de bottom er de ole rabbit gulley.

“I riz up on one arm en hit look lak ev'y bone in it 'gun ter crack. Den I prop up on t'er arm, en dat wuz wus'n de fust one. I been ev'y livin' minute sence day broke gittin' on my feet en climbin' outen dat gulley. Yer needn't be laughin' at me, honey,—hit gives me er spell er de dry grins.”

But we couldn't help it. To think of our dear, fat Aunt Becky racing off through the fields, and tumbling into the rabbit gulley, was too much for us all.



“De wust uv it all is, I didn’t put no bullit in de muskit nohow. I cle’r fergot tell I come ’long todes de house jes’ now. I didn’t have none, so I tuck’n put in er little rock stidder de bullit.”

Aunt Becky rubbed her stiff arms while we laughed.

“After all!” mother said, “the raiders have taken something for us to remember them by. Monday is gone, and two of the mules.” Monday was one of our seven-days-of-the-week darkies, and he and the two mules had deserted us and become raiders.

The morning had half passed when we heard a loud noise up the “big road,” and saw a squad of soldiers tearing along towards the house. They came so fast that we had not time to be frightened before we saw them rein their tired, dusty mules and horses before our gate. Aunt Becky did not shoulder the musket this time, but she stood quietly by mother’s side.



The officer in command came up the walk, and stood at the foot of the steps. We expected to hear him say, "You are all my prisoners," but he did not. He bowed pleasantly, and said:

"Madam, will you be so kind as to give us something to eat, and to let us rest awhile outside?"

Mother invited him in, but he thanked her, and said that none of the soldiers should enter the house. Here was excitement enough. This time we could see in broad daylight what the raiders looked like. It was true that their caps hid their horns, and I thought these horns must be quite small, since they did not stick up through those little flat caps. They had guns and canteens and knapsacks, and looked very grand to me, in spite of their dirt and holes.

I could not understand why they called us all "Johnnie," girls and boys, black and white, all alike, I did not know, then, that the whole South was named "Johnnie."



It took much work and hurry to prepare a dinner for so many men, and we children were sent to every hen and guinea nest, that we could find, for eggs. Some hams, flour, potatoes, and sugar were brought out secretly from their hiding-places, and our good Aunt Minnie cooked her very best.

Two tables were set, one in the kitchen and one in the dining-room, and mother decided to put her silver knives, forks and spoons on the table, and make it look as well as possible. The officer had acted like a gentleman, and she meant to treat him like one. It took a long while to make Aunt Becky consent to this, and to bring the silver from its hiding-place.

“Dey won’t be nare livin’ piece lef’,” she declared, when she brought it in.

I think some of the soldiers would have liked to search the house, but the officer had given his word that the house should not be entered, and he kept it.



When the dinner was ready, he ordered some of the soldiers into the kitchen to the table set there, and the others he led into the dining-room with him. They filed into the room in regular soldier style, and seated themselves, with the officer at the head of the table.

Aunt Becky stood behind his chair, with her eyes roving fiercely all over the table every minute. She had on a clean apron and "head-han'kercher," and she waited upon the raiders in fine style. The officer laughed when he knew that we called them raiders.

"What are raiders?" he said to me.

"Men who steal and kill people," I answered, innocently, and added, "and they have horns on their heads."

He was just about to give me a chance to look for his horns, when a loud scream from Aunt Becky stopped him. "He's got de teaspoon!" and in an instant she pounced upon one of the soldiers, and held him fast. The officer looked



very angry, and commanded the thief to put back the spoon upon the table, and to go out to the porch and stand there.

When this was done, Aunt Becky allowed the dinner to go on, but nothing was half so pleasant after that, for the officer was very sorry that one of his men had acted so dishonorably.

After the dinner was over, he went out to the front porch, and sat down alone. I followed him, without being invited, and he talked to me while his men fed and watered the mules and horses.

“Little girl,” he said,—he never said “Johnnie,” as his men did,—“where is your papa?”

“In the war,” I answered.

I remember that he looked a little sad when I said this.

“And is he living?”

“Oh yes, and he writes us letters about all the battles.”

“And have you any brothers?”



"I had one, but he was in the war, too, and he is dead now. But don't tell mamma that you know, for she never lets us speak of brother, it makes her cry so."

"No," he said, touching my hair; "I understand, I will not tell her. But why did your mamma put her silver on the table today for such wicked people as raiders?"

"I don't know. She would do it, and Aunt Becky told her that everything would be stolen, but mamma made Aunt Becky bring it out."

He laughed, then began feeling in his pocket, while I looked closely at his head, for I felt sure that I must have been mistaken about the horns, and I could not see a bump of any kind on his head. When he drew his hand from his pocket, he said:

"Here is something for you, my dear, It belonged once to my little girl in the North. Keep it to remember your raiders. I shall never see you again. Soon the war will be over,



and your papa will come back to you, but you must not forget me."

Mother came to the doorway, as I slipped from his lap, and I held out my present to her. It was a necklace clasp with a ruby set in it.

"Madam," he said, "we must be going. You have trusted me, and I thank you."

I heard no more, for I ran off to show my treasure. When he was gone, I saw that mother had been crying, and she held a little slip of paper in her hands with the officer's name on it. She kept this slip many years, but it was finally lost. I still keep my treasure, and have wished many times that I could see again the captain of our raiders.





# *How Captain Newt reached THE Union Lines*

VICKSBURG boys never lacked for excitement. The great river rolled before them, and its capabilities were exhaustless. Steamers passed back and forth at all hours of the day and night, and it was seldom that several of them could not be found at the wharves, discharging or taking on cargo. And naturally the boys felt it belonged to them to see that everything was done right. No freight could be properly transferred without their presence. No passenger left the boat without the consciousness of being under close surveillance.

The wharves were the common property of the boys, and woe to the wharfinger who said them nay. His life was henceforth a burden to him, and the juvenile ingenuity of the city was freely



taxed in his behalf. But usually the wharfinger was a wise man in his generation, and freely conceded what he knew could not be withheld. There were many cozy nooks among the piles of freight and cotton-bales, and here the boys met to discuss the present and lay plans for the future, and generally the future oscillated between steamboating and piracy.

But when the early sixties saw the freight of steamers gradually change from cotton-bales and merchandise to soldiers and munitions of war, the ambition of the boys veered round to the possession of muskets and revolvers. Swimming contests and piratical schemes were forgotten in the quickly formed military company, and in marches and countermarches up and down the streets.

The question of social distinction among the boys had long ago been settled, and those who could out-swim, out-dive and out-run the others had taken easy precedence.



So it was that ragged Newt Bixby, whose father had fired on the River Belle and later joined the Union forces when war was declared, became leader, and Charlie Calhoun second in command. Charlie's father was a colonel in the —th Mississippi, and was with Lee in Virginia. Charlie was a born aristocrat, and had been "raised" on a large sugar plantation, where there were hundreds of negroes who were always ready to obey the slightest wish of the "young mas'r." He had thus naturally acquired a haughty manner, but was generous, brave and noble in disposition, and a universal favorite with the boys. His knowledge of tactics and military matters seemed wonderful to the boys, and it was not long before it became a saying among them that Charlie furnished the brains and Newt the dash for the company.

Though impulsive, Newt was a prudent boy. He was in an intensely southern town, where the feeling was wholly against the North. Be-



sides, his mother's employment was fine embroidery, and her employers were the wives and daughters of Confederate soldiers. They had been good friends, and their boys were his chums and comrades. It could do no good, and might occasion a great deal of harm, for him to give utterance to his real feelings. No one knew positively where his father had gone, though it was suspected. Among his associates Newt was occasionally called "Yank," but rather in playful raillery than anger.

All the boys' leisure was now spent in drills and manœuvres. There were few able men in the city outside the garrison. Even the older boys were on duty with the guard, or away in the regular army. Provisions were getting scarce as the river communications began to close up, and every face grew anxious and expectant. The boys forgot their years, and went into the drill with the earnestness of those who expected to be called to the front at any time.



But in the hearts of two of the company—Newt's and a boy named Tad Baker—the front meant the Union army.

Gradually the gunboats of the enemy crept toward the city, until the entire water-front was occupied. Then soldiers and batteries seemed to spring up from the land-sides, and the city awoke to the fact that it was besieged. It could be only temporary, of course, for were there not twenty-seven thousand of the bravest of the Southern army on guard? What mattered it how superior were the forces of the enemy?

But it became terribly real when the bombardment commenced. The previous silence had seemed oppressive, and when it was suddenly broken by the thundering crashes of artillery which made the ground shake and the very foundations of the buildings tremble, it seemed as if the end of things had come, in truth. The sky was cob-webbed with the criss-crossing red lines streaming from flying bomb-shells. Broken



window-glass rattled upon the side-walks, and a hail-storm of iron fragments descended upon the city.

No wonder the non-combatants frantically sought a place of safety; cellars, strong buildings, anything which promised shelter. But a few hours showed them how futile such shelter was. The screaming shells and heavy masses of iron had little respect for frame buildings and stone walls.

All through the day they crouched trembling, and not till the darkness put an end to the uproar did they venture forth to ascertain the damage done.

As the days went by, and week followed week in slow, dreadful suspense, the first unreasoning fear began to wear off, and the course of a shrieking shell was watched with a tolerably correct calculation of its probable fall.

Holes, or tunnels, were dug in the perpendicular clay banks back of the city, and whenever



the bombardment recommenced, the women and children hurried to them for safety. The caves were branched like the letter Y, and would hold from ten to thirty persons. As there were upward of three thousand non-combatants in the city, it took a long line of caves to accommodate them.

Before the end of the six weeks' siege, many had become so used to the noise of the shells that they retreated very leisurely to the caves when the firing recommenced. One eye, however, was always kept warily on the heavens.

During the first few days the Vicksburg Cadets were very prompt in their attendance upon the caves, but one afternoon, as a sudden shower of iron hail sent every one hurrying from the city, Captain Newt Bixby communicated with his officers and, with their aid, managed to collect most of the company outside the caves.

"Soldiers must not be children!" he shouted, his clear young voice rising above the din of the



flying shells. "If any of the boys want to enter the caves, let them go. We don't want them. We have had our scare, and now it is time to show ourselves worthy of our fathers and brothers. All the cadets who remain in the ranks now must do it with the free will of soldiers who are ready to die with their comrades."

He paused a moment, but no one stirred.

'Good!' he exclaimed, "Now, boys, there are nearly sixty of us, and I think we can be as good soldiers as some boys who have entered the army. We are too young for that, so we must look after the duties our fathers have been obliged to leave. Corporal Johnson will deploy twenty men between the caves and the city to assist such as need it, while the rest of us will return to the streets and do what we can to help stragglers and to prevent fires,"

Even as he spoke, there came a wild shriek from a group of women who were hurrying toward one of the more distant caves. A fragment



of shell had struck one of their number and torn away part of her left arm. A small child held by that arm had fallen to the ground, apparently unhurt. At the same moment the storm of shell increased, and the forms of the woman and her child could hardly be seen for the clouds of dust. The rest of the women fled shrieking to the caves, and most of the spectators quickly followed their example. Even the Cadets wavered for a moment as the iron rain began to fall about them. But only for a moment. Then Captain Newt Bixby's voice was heard forming the men into compact body, and as they marched back to the city, Corporal Johnson and one of his men were seen moving the wounded woman to the nearest cave.

Reaching the center of the desolate city, the boys separated into squads and sought different parts of the town. Some of the inhabitants still remained in their homes, and occasionally a store door was found open and its proprietor



peering from behind a pile of barrels or boxes. During the afternoon several incipient fires were put out, and a bomb taken care of before it had time to explode.

After a few weeks the boys became accustomed to the noise of battle and could hear the shells whistle by with supreme indifference. The excitement of action they found to be immeasurably preferable to being half-smothered in the caves. Several of their number had been more or less hurt, and brave Corporal Johnson had met a soldier's death.

The city was becoming more and more desolate every day. Most of the grocery and provision stores were closed. They had nothing left to sell. Flour was \$200. a barrel, corn \$10. a bushel, bacon \$5. a pound, and coffee and poultry not to be had at any price. Mule-meat had to take the place of poultry beef and mutton.

The streets were littered with broken shells and bombs. Here and there a citizen, for want



of other employment, had gathered a ton or more of broken iron and piled it up in his yard. The strange pyramids were ghastly reminders of the times. There were no newspapers or visitors to give news of the outside world, nothing but the incessant bomb-shelling from the implacable circle outside. The streets were deserted, fruit and candy-booths a thing of the past; the non-combatants had no energy for anything but to walk back and forth, back and forth—and wait.

Hardly an entire window-pane remained in the city. Most of the chimneys were more or less demolished, Nearly all of the buildings had great ragged holes torn through the boarding and plaster. But the people were getting used to it. It took an unusually severe tempest of shell to start them leisurely for the caves, to which a few scattering shot had formerly sent them skurrying.

One day Captain Newt Bixby and his men



saw a tongue of flame shoot up from one of the public buildings near the wharves. It was in one of the most exposed situations, and under the direct fire of the gunboats. The flame was on the roof, and, ~~unless it could be~~ extinguished, would undoubtedly destroy the building and all the valuable papers within. There were no means of entrance, as the edifice had been closed since the beginning of the siege, and the keys were in the possession of the commandant of the garrison, half-a-mile away.

But the Vicksburg Cadets had been taking severe lessons in a very practical school, and veteran firemen ~~could~~ not have been more prompt and efficacious. Like many other Southern towns, Vicksburg was well-supplied with shade trees. Several of these threw their arms directly over the building. Like squirrels the boys went up the trees, and were soon on the roof fighting the fire. It had made little headway, and the boys extinguished it before help arrived from the



garrison. In the excitement little attention had been paid to the storm of shell, but when the soldiers of the fort slowly descended into the now open building, they assisted the Cadets in bearing away three of their number.

The next day General Lamb sent for Newt Bixby and Charlie Calhoun. When they were ushered into his presence, he turned from the group of officers he was conversing with and regarded them earnestly. Newt had an ugly scar from an exploding shell across his cheek, while one of Charlie's arms was in a sling.

After a short silence the General said in half-sad, half-musing tones:

"Strange that our cause should waver when even the children act the part of veterans." Then, more briskly: "I have been hearing wonderful reports of you, my lads. If your strength was equal to your courage, I would have you join the river expedition to-night. Some times a youngster's agility and quick wit



are of as much service as the greater strength of a man."

"Try us," cried Charlie.

Newt's breath came a little more quickly. So far his work had not clashed with his Union principles, and he had been able to give to it his whole heart and strength—but now?

Then came another thought. His mother was working at the home of one of her employers, and would be there for months yet. She would not need him. He had been staying at the house of a boy friend, and for weeks his one great thought had been to escape through the blockade to his father in the Union army. He would be able to find some service there.

Perhaps this river expedition offered him the very opportunity he sought.

"Yes, try us," he said, less enthusiastically but no less firmly than Charlie.

The general smiled.

"All in good time, my boys. You seem to



have the soldiers' ambition of being rewarded for one brave deed with the opportunity of encountering still greater perils. But I summoned you for a different purpose. Are there any good swimmers in your company? I mean boys who could swim a mile, and pass half the time under water if necessary. They will have to pick their way in the dark, dodge gunboats and river sentries, meet deadly perils, and, if they succeed, be rewarded with the consciousness of having done what they could for their cause."

While he was speaking, the boys listened with flushed cheeks, and they now pressed forward eagerly. But as the general nodded significantly at Charlie's useless arm, the latter drew back in confusion.

"Never mind, my boy, I have other work that you can do. So you understand the river thoroughly?" he continued, turning to Newt, and speaking in a quick, sharp voice.

"He's the best swimmer on the river, and can



swim under water 'most as well as a fish," said Charlie, before Newt had time to reply.

The general looked pleased.

"I think you are the man we want. The success of the enterprise means more than you could understand. I have been cautioned against entrusting the affair to a boy, but I think a sharp lad can pass the lines with less difficulty than a man. You may select two of the best swimmers in the company to accompany you, and report to me here to-night, at twelve o'clock, for instructions. In the meantime I would advise you to get as much sleep as you can."

As he turned away, and resumed his conversation with the officers, the boys concluded that the audience was over and slowly left the room. In Newt's eyes was a troubled expression, and he had half a mind to go back and make a clean breast of it to the general. But the thought of meeting his father and joining the Union cause deterred him. Only, he would see that no harm



came to these people who were trusting him, through their confidence.

When they reached the corner where they must separate, the boys' hands met for a moment.

"Perhaps we shall not see each other again," said Charlie soberly.

"It'll be a tight squeeze," replied Newt; "but I shall be as careful as I can without shirking. And—er—no matter what happens, Charlie, if you knew all I don't think you'd ever blame me."

Late in the afternoon a dark mass of clouds began to overspread the sky, and when Newt and the two other boys he had selected went to the general's quarters for instruction, they had to literally feel their way. A strong wind was blowing, and a drizzling rain had set in from the southeast. It would be a bad night.

The general was writing when they entered, but presently turned from his desk.

"It will be a terrible night," he said, abruptly, "Do you think you can reach Cane Point?"



The boys started. Cane Point was over a mile down the stream, and surrounded with such a network of snags and sunken limbs and rocks that it was considered dangerous, even by daylight.

"It'll be an awful job to swim 'ginst the wind that far," said one of the boys, looking white.

"I agree with you," said the general. "Besides, you can do better service here, fighting fire. And do you two wish to risk your lives on the river?" turning to Newt and his companion.

"If you will let us," they answered.

"Very well. Here are two despatches, exactly alike. If one of you fails, the other may succeed. You will go to the little cabin under the three live oaks and give the papers to the cripple you will find there. If you succeed, show a light from Live Oak Hill. A lantern swung in a half circle will answer. You had better not attempt to return until the siege is raised." He paused a moment, then added in an impressive voice:



“The papers must not be seen by the enemy, and if necessary you must die yourselves to insure their destruction. Now go.”

The boys made their way slowly along until they reached the nearest wharf. The wind was blowing fiercely in their faces and they could hear the beat of the waves against the spiles. Overhead, everything was inky black, except for the occasional streaks of fire across the heavens.

In spite of their years, and the excitement of the moment, the boys fully realized the peril of the undertaking, and made every preparation to meet it. Their clothing was removed and carefully placed under a pile of lumber. It did not occur to them that they would probably never see it again, even should the trip be successful. Then fastening the water-proof bags containing the despatches more securely about their necks, they dropped quietly into the river and disappeared in the darkness.

There was little of the excitement of battle



about it; nothing but the solid wall of blackness around, which was now and then cut by a flash, showing glimpses of the black hulls of the silent watch-dogs before them. Sometimes the flashes were followed by such deafening, reverberating crashes that the boys were obliged to clinch their teeth firmly to keep from turning back to the wharf.

The current was in their favor, but the wind against them. However, it served to deaden the sound of the waves against their faces. As they neared the line of gunboats, they swam as lightly as possible, keeping all but their faces under water. The darkness was full of ears now, and even the wind and waves could not smother unusual sounds. One by one they felt, rather than saw, the dark hulls glide by. Frequently they had to sink under water as a sudden flash showed sentinel forms within a few yards. A dozen times they were on the point of being discovered, but escaped as by a seeming



miracle. Their progress was slow, laborious and uncertain. Sometimes their hands would encounter the side of a vessel before they were aware of its vicinity. Since leaving the wharf neither had dared to speak. In spite of its seeming desolation, the river was keenly alert. Once or twice Newt fancied from his companion's labored breathing that he was becoming exhausted.

Suddenly, as they were moving along side by side, a great light flashed upon them from the deck of a vessel close by, and a dozen stern faces met their eyes.

The boys sank instantly, and as they disappeared from sight, a shower of bullets rained upon the water. Second after second passed, and a glimpse of a white face was seen several rods down the river and was met by another patter of bullets. A little to the right another white face was seen for an instant and received a similar welcome. Several minutes passed, and a dark spot appeared still lower down. A





““I have been hearing wonderful reports of you my lads.””







perfect storm of bullets almost instantly fell about it.

A few seconds, and then somebody said, "I guess they're done for." The lights disappeared, and the vessel returned to its dark watchfulness.

Hour after hour went by, and the storm increased in violence. Limbs were torn from the trees and hurled into the streets. The black expanse of the river gave no intimation of the silent enemy. His presence was swallowed up in the world of darkness.

In his quarters the general paced up and down. He had reckoned much on the success of this enterprise. It meant much to the cause. In spite of its apparent impossibility, he had had hopes that the boys might succeed—had almost brought himself to believe that they would.

But as the hours went by, he ceased to glance toward Live Oak Hill. The enterprise had failed, and the brave boys were at the bottom of the river. Well, they had met a soldier's death,



and, somewhere, would find a soldier's reward. Their fathers and brothers had met the same fate or probably would meet it in the near future.

Suddenly, as he passed the window, he uttered an exclamation of joy. Surely there was a light on Live Oak Hill, a lantern being swung to and fro. Even as it moved, a brother officer entered the room with beaming face and the two grasped hands.

Meanwhile a half-unconscious boy—only one—was being cared for by a tall man, who seemed to have forgotten his supposed crippled condition, as he moved quickly about the room. The boy was covered with bruises and cuts, and blood flowed freely from half-a-dozen wounds upon him. He looked as though he had been pounded from head to foot with jagged clubs.

Out in the river was another boy floating on his back, his face just above the surface, watching. Many times during the trip down had Newt thought how easy it would be for him to call to





‘Out on the river was another boy.’

one of the gunboats, explain himself, and clamber on board. But there was his companion, nearly exhausted, who might need assistance. He could not desert him.

He waited until he saw the tall man assist his friend to the little cabin, then turned and resumed his journey down the river. He had learned that a large Union encampment was a half mile below.

The storm was now breaking and stars coming out in the sky. As he swam on, Newt unfastened



the waterproof bag from his neck and dropped it into the river. He could not betray his friends, even though he would not help them. An hour later he was inside the Union lines.





# Communicating with **THE ENEMY**

**I**T was the hottest day of the war summer of 1863. The little Pennsylvania village of Buddford seemed to gasp for breath. The single street that wandered aimlessly from the store to the station was deserted.

The familiar loungers on the piazza of the Keystone House had ceased to conduct the war, and had retreated to the shaded bar-room.

At the station the rails seemed to burn the eye as they shone in the July sun. Michael Boyle, the track-walker's boy, carefully avoided them as, with bare feet, he hurried up from the bridge.

On he went, across the station platform, over the road, past the mill, where the tall elms gave a moment's relief from the pitiless glare, to a low, rambling red house which seemed to crawl up



the hill-side. The woodbine shaded the doorway, where two little girls dressed in dainty Paris frocks, were tying up bouquets of wild flowers, in each of which they hid a little note.

Mike stopped under the syringa bush, charmed with the picture.

"Sure, it's like angels they look—the pair of them, in their soft, white, hanging things! And to call the likes of thim 'traitors'!"

Mike's warm heart throbbed as he felt he was their only friend.

"Miss Janet!" he called, eagerly.

The children sprang up with delighted eyes, the younger one scattering a lapful of flowers as she caught the boy's hand in hers, and drew him to the step.

Mike pulled his straw hat from his stiff red hair, and wiped his forehead on his coarse shirt-sleeve.

"There's a trainful of prisoners coming from the front, Miss Janet," he said to the older girl.



“Yes, I know it,” she said. “We were making our bouquets before going to the gap.”

“Yes, miss, but they’re repairin’ the track jist before the bridge, and the train will have to stop. It’s due before long, and father says it may be delayed fifteen minutes. There’ll be a chance for you to spake to thim poor fellows, and to give thim some water.

“O Mike, you splendid, thoughtful boy,” cried Charlotte, impetuously.

Janet could not speak. There was a great lump swelling in her throat, and her heart beat tumultuously.

To speak to the prisoners, to minister to their wants,—men from her own loved South whom she had seen, day after day, huddled in box-cars, being carried to the Elmira prison! To tell them that she, too, was from Dixie; that her honored grandfather had died in defence of the Confederacy, and that her uncle was even now fighting under Lee!



What if some of the men should be from South Carolina, her mother's State?

All through the summer the children had written pitiful little notes brimming over with zeal and love, and tying flowers around them, had thrown them into the closely packed doorways of the cars as they wound slowly up the grade through the gap.

The girls' parents were in Europe, where the young mother was slowly recovering her health after the shock of her father's death. Married to a Northern man long resident in the South, whose sympathies were divided between love of the Union and attachment to the fortunes of his adopted State, Mrs. Farnsleigh had lived on her father's plantation on the Ashley, where the older children were born.

Just before the war Mr. Farnsleigh's business made it necessary for him to spend the winter in New York. Then came the firing on Sumter. Mr. Farnsleigh was convinced that the Southern



cause was a righteous one, but he could not take up arms against the Union.

Accordingly, he compromised, left his shipping business, and his four little girls as well, in the hands of his confidential clerk, Mr. Rawson, and took his invalid wife and their baby to England for the summer.

“It will be all over by autumn,” they said.

But it did not end with the autumn, nor the next. The children had spent the second summer at Lake George, and the winters with an aunt in New York. Their mother’s delicate health required her absence in Europe, and she was too ill to have them with her.

For this summer, 1863, Mr. Rawson had found them a place in a comfortable old house in the little village in the Pennsylvania mountains, and had left them there in charge of two trusty old servants.

Janet and Charlotte were the eldest, and there were two little girls besides. Charlotte was very



pretty, with her great brown, flashing eyes, and Janet, though she was plainer than her sister, had a certain distinguished air.

The sentiment of the village was quite against the girls. Those were days of intense feeling, both North and South, and this feeling sometimes included the weak with the strong.

There were long afternoons in June when Janet and Charlotte would gladly have forgotten political differences and played with the children on the grass-grown village green; but they were never asked.

So it had come about that Mike Boyle was their sole champion and friend. To him they had poured out their hopes and fears, sure always of sympathy. It was with a glad heart that Mike carried the welcome news about the coming prisoners that blazing summer day.

"Mike," said Janet, as soon as she could speak, "we must hurry. Charlotte, get our hats and our silver cups, and come along. Mike can get the pail at his house."



It was half a mile from the station to the "S." The worst of the walk would be over when they reached the first curve, as far as the heat was concerned, but they must cross the bridge, and Janet's timid heart failed her as she thought of the dizzy height and precarious footing.

Still, she stepped bravely on the bridge. Janet would scream at a cow, but could have died for an idea.

A little relief from the sun came when they reached the first curve. There was always some air stirring through the gap. Here was Mike's home,—a whitewashed shanty clinging to a rock,—while the garden, "six feet wide and a mile long," as Mike described it after hoeing, followed the road-bed in both directions.

The children waited while Mike went in to get the pail. At this point there were men at work on the track, a hand-car being hauled up on the bank. A rail had been taken up, and a new one had to be laid. Mike's father, with a



flag in his hand, was crossing the bridge to stop the expected train. As the girls stepped on the first tie of the bridge the boss called out:

“Here, Mike Boyle, that’s no place for girls! Come back, the whole of you!”

Charlotte, turning, smiled into the forbidding face.

“I can go where any boy can,” she said. “We’re not a bit afraid. Please say ‘yes,’ for we’re going anyway.”

The boss laughed, and let them go on.

“They’ll be all right,” grunted Silas Whitmore; “there’s no killing that girl. She crawled under a train in the station last week ’cause she was in a hurry.”

There was no planking over the bridge. Charlotte flitted from tie to tie, racing with Mike. Janet, with compressed lips and white face, followed her. It was not more than three hundred feet, yet it seemed a mile to the faint, terrified child; but the end came at last, and



Janet sank on the shaded bank, while Charlotte and Mike brought a brimming pail of water from a spring at the bottom of the ravine.

“Hark!” said Charlotte, her eyes growing solemn and dark, as an engine and train turned the curve and stopped.

The train was made up of box-cars. The Union officer in charge hurried out to see what was the matter, and the guard was drawn up along the side of the train.

Mike brought the pail, and the girls, each with a cup in hand, stood beside him. The prisoners crowded to the open doors in the sides of the cars.

They were wretched men—dirty, worn, hungry and dejected, and dressed in every variety of garments, from butternut jeans to a discarded Union uniform.

“Water? Hurrah! Good for you, little ones! Here, pass it up!” cried the men, as the children stood with their water-pail before the open door of one of the cars.



Suddenly a stern voice from the inside of the car called, "Fall back from the door!" and a tall, dark-haired young man forced his way to the front. The men fell back respectfully.

"How much water have you, boy?" he said, addressing Mike.

There was something in the tone that thrilled Janet's heart. She looked into the sad young face, and unconsciously assuming command, answered for Mike: "I am so sorry our pail holds so little, but it was all we could get!"

A strange look came upon the young man's face. The child's voice carried him back years, to his now desolated home by the Ashley.

He had had a sister, a beautiful, brilliant girl, full of spirits and sunshine; not at all like this pale-faced, blue-eyed child of the North; and yet this girl's voice was curiously like Charlotte's when anything grieved her!

Charlotte, he had heard, was dead now—buried in a foreign land, the last of his family



to go. What had he to look forward to? Imprisonment in the North, while every man was needed at the South.

No; whatever the risk might be, he would take his chance to escape. If death were the alternative, it would not come too soon.

“Fall into line, my men. Don’t push or hurry. There will be water and time enough for all.”

He was still their beloved young officer, though he was in tatters. The men willingly obeyed him, Back and forth the cups flew, as the men filed slowly past—a dismal procession.

“‘I was thirsty and ye gave me drink.’ Do you-uns know Who said that?” exclaimed a lank Tennessee exhorter among the prisoners as he limped past the door.

“We are proud to do it. We are from the South!” said Janet, her eyes filled with happy tears.

The news spread through the car. “From



home? Those children? Of course they are! You could tell it!"

The men forgot their woes in blessing their little allies.

The guard, chatting together, saw the child, and although it was against orders to allow any one to communicate with the prisoners, they were humane, and overlooked it.

The water was gone. Charlotte and Mike were busy answering questions, regardless of the statute which says that "Whosoever holds correspondence with the enemy shall suffer death or such other punishment as a court martial may direct," when Janet saw the young officer move to the empty doorway on the other side of the car.

Instinctively she knew that he was planning an escape—a hopeless one, she knew, that must result in death. She made a dash between the cars, and crept up to the opposite doorway.

The captured officer was looking keenly





“Back and forth the cup flew.”







down into the ravine. The guard—all but two or three soldiers well in advance—were on the other side of the road.

One jump, a short run, and he could make a dash for the river. What was that to a trained athlete? It would seem like the old days at the University of Virginia. He might escape the eyes of the guard, and there might be people kind enough to shelter him till the search was over.

He was about to spring, when an imploring voice behind him said:

“Don’t! don’t! You’ll surely be caught and shot! Even if you get to the river they’ll spread the alarm, and the whole village will be out. There is no one to take you in, no, not one!”

That voice again? Against his resolution it held the young man back. The tears rolled down Janet’s cheeks as she looked in his face. If mamma had been very ill, and were starving and heart-broken, she would look just like this young man!



“Ah, I would help you if I could,” Janet went on, in an agonized voice, “but indeed, indeed I cannot! Go on to Elmira. You will be well treated there, and as you are an officer you will soon be exchanged.”

“God bless you, my child. It was madness! What is your name?”

“Janet,” she said, softly, through her tears. Here the whistle sounded.

“Janet!” called a clear voice; “here are the flowers!”

It was Charlotte, with her arms full of bouquets.

“Throw them into the doorway, Charlotte,” called Janet.

The officer stood motionless. Had the years rolled back? Was not that graceful child in white and scarlet his sister Charlotte? He looked about him, and the dream vanished; but the resemblance and the name?

The train began to move slowly. The men



crowded to the door, waving their flowers and calling out good-bys. Charlotte sprang on the abutment of the bridge, and waving her scarlet sash, began to sing in a sweet, clear voice, "Way down South in Dixie!"

The men took up the refrain, "Away, away!" so gayly that one would have thought it anything but a train-



load of captives bound northward to prison. "Captain," said one of the men, as they slowly rounded the "S," "those children left this cup in the car."

"Give it to me," said the officer.

He knew the cup, however, before he read



the inscription upon it: "Charlotte Fairfax Dunwoodie, 1834."

Yes, this was Charlotte's cup, and those were Charlotte's children! The oldest, Janet, had been named for their mother. As for the little one, Charlotte, he laughed aloud as he recalled that fearless figure upon the abutment, the tangled hair thrown back, the rich, glowing face, the fiery abandon with which she waved and sang "Dixie."

There was something to live for now, something left to love. He had forgotten his sister's children, or only thought of them as babies travelling abroad with their father.

"Well, captain," said one of the men at last, who felt that something unusual was taking place, "can you make out the name?"

The captain's face lighted with one of his rare but sweet smiles

"Charlotte Fairfax Dunwoodie," he read again, this time aloud.



"Boys," he answered, "the owner of this cup was my sister, and those were her children. I will keep the cup till I find them again!"

Here was something to talk about, and the prisoners forgot their present fatigue and coming imprisonment in this absorbing topic. Captain Paul Dunwoodie treasured each one of the little notes which the children had hidden in the bouquets, and there was many a smile and a tear as the childish missives were read.

"'Twern't no chance, boys," said the Tennessee exhorter, "that led they-uns down to this train and car. 'Twas the hand of the Lord."

That night, at Elmira, when the prisoners were searched and registered, Dunwoodie gave up his cup, telling his story briefly.

"You shall have it back when you are exchanged," said the officer in charge.

"May I keep these notes?" Dunwoodie said faintly, for he found it hard to ask a favor.

The officer read them over. His own little



girls were sleeping safely in Boston, under a loving mother's care. He thought of those other children, alone, unhappy and in an unfriendly land, but doing and daring for what they believed to be right, and his lip twitched under his brown mustache.

"They're full of disloyal sentiments," he said, smiling, "but I guess it won't matter."

It was the second time that day that the nation, stong in its righteousness, had tolerated treason!

So Paul Dunwoodie had his little notes for bookmarks in his Testament. The book opened itself, where one sweet note of Charlotte's nestled, and one could read on the page, "Their angels do always behold the face of my Father which is in heaven."

The curve soon hid the train from the children's view, and they turned to go home, their hearts filled with exultation.

"Charlotte," said the careful Janet, "you must have left your cup on the car!"



Charlotte looked contrite. It had been a christening present to her mother, and she had given it to her little daughter, with her name, and now it was gone!

“Well,” said Charlotte, “it was in a good cause!”

With Mike’s father to hold her hand, Janet recrossed the bridge with comparative ease. Charlotte followed, beating the roll-call with remarkable precision upon the bottom of the upturned tin-pail. Drumming was one of her accomplishments, and she owned a fine snare-drum, which was the envy of the village boys. The workmen had wheeled back their hand-car, and were about to return to the station.

“Jump on,” said the boss, kindly, to Janet. “You look pretty tired. You ain’t so strong as your sister?”

“No,” said Janet, gratefully. “I had a fever in the winter.”

“She has them every year,” said Charlotte,



proudly, "a different one each time! There is not a girl in New York has had as many fevers as Janet!"

The men laughed, and Janet blushed.

"Good-by, Mike," called the children, as Mike turned to his own door. "Come to-morrow."

The hand-car glided off, and the station was soon reached.

"Let's wait for the train from Elmira," said Charlotte. "It will be in soon. Perhaps some one will get off here."

Some one did. It was Mr. Rawson coming from New York.

"Well, my dears," he said, in his precise way, "I have brought you something better than candies this time. Your father has taken a house in England, and you are all to go to him by the next steamer, I am to go with you, and the servants. To get the Saturday steamer, we must leave on the early train to-morrow. I think we can accomplish it."



The children, screaming with delight, rushed to the house. Foster, the hired man, equal to any emergency, worked all night, and in the morning the low, red house, which had sheltered the little brood for three months, was empty. Except that they were many dollars richer, the villagers could hardly realize the Farnsleighs had been there. They left as mysteriously as they came.

When Mike ran down the track the next afternoon, and stood by the open gate under the syringa-bush, he found the doors and windows closed. Had they gone without a word to him or a thought of him?

The bitter tears welled to his eyes, and he threw himself upon the deserted doorstep, where Charlotte's wilted flowers lay in the sun.

Then a ray of comfort came. Janet, who delighted in mysteries, had placed a box in a clump of bushes, which the children used as a post-office. They might have written!



Mike ran to the place. Under the box stood Charlotte's drum, and upon it was a book which Janet had left him. In the box were two little notes, tear-stained and breathing remembrance.

"We will never forget you, Mike," wrote Janet, "and when the war is over and we go home, I will tell mamma what you did for us and our soldiers, and coax her to have you come to South Carolina. You'll come, won't you?"

"'Come,' is it!" said Mike aloud, in his delight. "It's over land and sea I'd go to meet them. I'll just be patient."

With his precious drum and book, and more precious notes, he turned sadly away from the empty doorstep, softly whistling "When this cruel war is over."

Four years later a happy and prosperous family gathered around the dinner-table at the old home on the Ashley. The girls were beside their mother, who, with recovered health and



happiness, bloomed like a Christmas rose. Uncle Paul Dunwoodie, strong and handsome, sat with his Northern bride on one side, and Charlotte on the other. Janet, grown half a head taller, and with more color in her pale face, was between her father and Mr. Rawson.

Mike Boyle, who had just been in, had proved just the man to superintend the work of the freed black people upon the plantation. He was so changed that, but for the stiff red hair, no one would have recognized him.

The silver cup shone bravely in front of Charlotte's place.

"Ah!" said Uncle Paul, "I can never see that cup without my heart beating faster! It seems too good for common use—something almost sacred. I propose that we have this inscription put on the bottom: 'This cup, and the hope that went with it, saved a desperate man from death,' and that we use it only on festival occasions as a 'loving cup!'"



“It all seems like a bad dream, dear,” said Mr. Farnsleigh; “all the separation and pain and terror.”

“Yes,” said her husband; “that’s the best way to think of it—as a dreadful nightmare, that had to come, but from which, thank God! the country has awakened.”

















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